

PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI



PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

DAILY HANSARD

THURSDAY, 20TH JUNE, 2019

[CORRECTED COPY]

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THURSDAY, 20TH JUNE, 2019

The Parliament resumed at 9.32 a.m., pursuant to adjournment.

HONOURABLE SPEAKER took the Chair and read the Prayer.

PRESENT

All Members were present.

MINUTES

HON. LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT IN PARLIAMENT.- Honourable Speaker, Sir, I move:

That the Minutes of the sitting of Parliament held on Wednesday, 19th June, 2019 as previously circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed.

HON. A.A. MAHARAJ.- Honourable Speaker, Sir, I second the motion.

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Members, Parliament will now vote on the motion.

The Question is:

That the Minutes of the sitting of Parliament held on Wednesday, 19th June, 2019 as previously circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of 'Noes')

HON. SPEAKER.- As no Member opposes, the motion is agreed to unanimously.

Motion agreed to.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome

HON. SPEAKER.- I welcome all Honourable Members to today's sitting of Parliament. I also welcome members of the public joining us in the gallery and those watching the live proceedings on television and the internet, and those listening to the radio. Thank you for taking an interest in your Parliament.

Honourable Members, please join me in welcoming the teachers and students from Navesau Adventist High School in Wainibuka.

(Acclamation)

HON. SPEAKER.- You are all most welcome to Parliament, and I hope that your visit will be educational and rewarding and that you will enjoy today's proceedings.

For the information of Honourable Members, a medical team from the Ministry will be stationed at the foyer at Level 2 to undertake health check and screening up until 4.00 p.m. today, and particularly for those who want a makeover.

CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Members, I have been advised that there are no Bill for consideration today.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON THE 2019-2020 APPROPRIATION BILL, 2019

HON.SPEAKER.- Honourable Members, the Parliament will now resolve into Committee of Supply to resume debate on the Heads in the Budget Estimates.

In Committee:

Head 25 – Ministry of Youth and Sports

MR CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, the floor is now open for any comments. You have the floor, Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Thank you Honourable Chairman. SEG 1, in terms of Personal Emoluments, there is a huge reduction from \$900 million to \$600 million. Does it impact on the operation given that the ministerial salary comes from that SEG?

HON. P.K. BALA.- Thank you Honourable Member.

Mr Chairman, Sir, as the Honourable Member highlighted about the ministerial salary, the ministerial salary has been shifted to the Ministry of Employment, so that is why there is a huge reduction. Apart from that, there were a few vacant positions that were supposed to be filled but during the restructure, we found out there is no need to fill those positions, so that is why there is a reduction. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Matanitobua, you have the floor.

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- Thank you, Honourable Chair. On Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 5, on the Review of Youth Development Programme (\$25,000); can the Minister enlighten the House?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Thank you Mr. Chairman, Sir. This will cater for the review of the existing youth programmes that we have in all divisions. We would like to take a stocktake of all the programmes that is in place right now, and that is why we have asked for that allocation, and that money has been given to us.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Biman Prasad, you have the floor.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Just a quick one, Mr Chair. Can the Honourable Minister explain the Aid-in-Kind, what does it involve, does it foresee evidence and social protection. Is it research or a study?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you, Honourable Minister.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Thank you Chairman, exactly, that is for the research funding that is given by the UNICEF.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Matanitobua, you have the floor.

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- Thank you, Honourable Chair. Still on Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 5, Honourable Minister, on the National Youth and Sports Conference (\$100,000), is it sufficient for this year or is it less or more?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir, as you are all aware we had the 1st National Youth Conference and the cost that was involved was around \$100,000, that is why we have asked for \$100,000. Apart from that we have been advised by the Ministry of Economy that we can also look for sponsorship. Thank you Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you, Honourable Salote Radrodro, you have the floor.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Honourable Chair, still on the same Programme, Activity 1, SEG 7, in regards to the National Youth Policy, with an allocation of \$30,000. Mr Chair, from 2015, we have been hearing the review of this National Youth Policy, could the Honourable Minister explain what this \$30,000 is for?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. The Honourable Member is quite right, time and again we have heard about the National Youth Policy, and I am happy to inform the Honourable House that by end of July, the review will be over, that is the deadline. And I think in one of the sessions, I have assured Parliament that by the end of July we will finish the review, so that is done. The allocation that we have, \$30,000, is for implementation, and that is why that money has been reflected there.

MR CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Anare Jale, you have the floor.

HON. A. JALE.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. My question is in regards to Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG 10, I hope we are on that.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Programme 1, Activity 1.

HON. A. JALE.- Sorry, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Bultavu, you have the floor.

HON. M.D. BUILTAVU.- Thank you, Mr. Chair, Sir. There is a new allocation on the National Employment Centre (NEC) volunteers, \$5,000. What is that new allocation for?

HON. P.K. BALA.- Mr. Chairman, Sir, there are two volunteers within the Ministry that was referred by the National Employment Centre (NEC). That is why you will see it is NEC volunteers because it has been referred by the NEC, and there are two volunteers attached to the Ministry.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Leawere, you have the floor.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Thank you, Mr. Chair. On SEG 10, there is quite a big reduction in terms of that SEG, the Upgrade of Youth Training Centres. Can we have an update from the Honourable Minister as to which ones will be impacted in terms of this Budget; how many centres are going to be assisted from this Budget? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. From this year, we will prioritise our training centres. So for 2019-2020, we will take on board the Naleba Youth Training Centre, whereby we will construct the accommodation centre for the students. Yes, just one.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Bulitavu, you have the floor.

HON. M.D. BUILTAVU.- Thank you, Mr. Chair, Sir. There used to be a Youth Entrepreneur Award in this particular programme, but it is not here this year.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Mr. Chairman, Sir, Honourable Members must have heard during the Minister for Economy's Budget presentation and then later on by the Honourable Minister for Trade that all the youth awards have been centralised and now it is with Ministry of Trade, because they have the mechanism in place and it is easy for them to organise and we will participate in that. That is why that allocation has been given to Ministry of Trade. *Vinaka!*

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Activity 2. Honourable Lynda Tabuya, you have the floor.

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- Thank you, Mr Chair. To the Honourable Minister, could you please clarify under SEG 7, the Youth and Sports Grant of a \$100,000. Can you please clarify if any of this was allocated for any of the teams going to the Pacific Games? And, furthermore, was any of this allocated (because it is in the last year and into this year) for the beach volleyball and volleyball teams?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. Honourable Members need to understand how this Pacific Games work in terms of...

(Honourable Member interjects)

HON. P.K. BALA.- You have been a former Minister for Sports?

(Honourable Member interjects)

HON. P.K. BALE.- So, Mr. Chairman, it is the three-party contribution, one is, the Fiji Association of Sports and National Olympic Committee (FASANOC), then the Government contribution, and the third contributor are the respective affiliates. In that regard, as far as the Pacific Games and all those teams that are taking part, they will have to pay their required subscriptions.

The money that has been given to us is for the youth clubs throughout the country, where they will be given grant division-wise, Eastern Division, Central and Western and the Northern Division. This allocation is specifically for the agriculture projects, food items, for canteen, *yaqona* cuttings and so on. So this is purely for the youth clubs. *Vinaka*.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Leawere, you have the floor.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Still on SEG 7, Duke of Edinburgh International Award. How do you roll out this Programme, do you work with the schools or is it a standalone item in the Ministry of Sports? It has increased in the Budget this year.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. You will see there is an increase, it is for more schools to participate. In fact, we have obtained the licence just in September 2017, to organise these programmes. The whole idea of the increased budget is to have more participation, not only for schools but for youth clubs as well. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Ratu Matanitobua, you have the floor.

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- Thank you, Honourable Chairman. Still on SEG 7, Youth Workers – Pilot Project (\$240,000). Can the Honourable Minister highlight some achievements of this Pilot Project? Thank you, Honourable Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. This is a new programme altogether. What we intend to do with this allocation is to appoint fulltime youth workers throughout the country. And the total number of youth workers who will be attached to the Ministry now will be 18. We would like to see that they are fulltime on the ground, they take the message and the programmes of Ministries at the grassroots level. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Ratu Dr. Atonio Lalabalavu, you have the floor.

HON. DR. RATU A.R. LALABALAVU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The question that I wanted to ask was asked by Honourable Ratu Matanitobua.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Rasova, you have the floor.

HON. S.R. RASOVA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir, and thank you, Honourable Minister. On Youth Workers - Pilot Project (\$240,000), given that most of the youth also go to prison (and I think the Minister for Defence had spoken about it yesterday) and now that you have \$240,000, those coming out of prison always wait for their subsistence money from the Fiji Corrections Service and sometimes there is no money there. Are they qualified as well to be included in this project as a pilot project for youth?

HON. P.K. BALA.- They can be part of the Pilot Project, but they cannot be the youth workers. This allocation is purely for the youth workers. This is the wages aspect. Thank you.

HON. S.R. RASOVA.- Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Activity 3?

(Chorus of 'Noes')

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Programme 2, Activity 1. Honourable Gavoka, you have the floor.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Mr. Chairman, SEG 6 – Boxing Commission of Fiji (\$50,000); can I just ask the Honourable Minister if he can provide edification on how we are preparing our boxers, the modality we follow, do we bring in experts to come and train them? Do we provide dual rings for them or some mini halls where they can train?

I am very concerned that a lot of our boxers are going overseas, mostly to Australia and New Zealand, and they do not perform very well. It is a sport that used to be quite dominant back in those days, names like Leweni Waqa, Sakaraia Ve. They were feared in this region. But right now our boys are going across just to be preparatory, it is almost like target practice for other Australian and New Zealanders vying for World Titles. So what do we have in terms of structure for our boxers in this country?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. At the outset, let me say that as Minister responsible, I am not very happy with the work that boxing is carrying out. Unfortunately, we have some Board Members in the Boxing Commission who are not doing their job and definitely they will be fired, that is number one.

(Laughter)

HON. P.K. BALA.- Number two, you are quite right in saying about the provision of rings. We are happy that Government has given us the old PWD Depot where renovation works have started and also one of the rings has been given with the assistance of the Australian High Commission, so definitely we are working towards that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Saukuru, you have the floor.

HON. J. SAUKURU.- Mr. Chairman, through you, I seek clarification on SEG 6 – Hosting of International Tournaments (\$3,100,000). Can the Honourable Minister give clarification on this?

HON. P.K. BALA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. The \$3.1 million has been given to the Ministry which will be given to the National Sports Commission. As you are all aware, Government has established the National Sports Commission to look after sporting organisations in the country, and the breakdown of this \$3.1 million is as follows:

- \$1million will be given to the Fiji Rugby Union for hosting, preparations and participation in the Pacific Nations Cup, the Australian National Championship, the 2019 Oceania Rugby Women's Fifteens Championship and the World Rugby Pacific Challenge.
- Fiji National Rugby League will be given \$908,000.
- Netball International Series will be given \$94,000.
- Fiji Football Association's OFC Under 23 Championship for Tokyo will be given \$90,000.
- Fiji Volleyball Federation will be given \$21,000, et cetera.

So this is basically the breakdown of that \$3.1 million, Mr. Chairman, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Leawere, you have the floor.

HON. M.R. LEAWARE.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On SEG 10, I see quite a reduction in the budgets of Construction of Rural Sports Complexes and also Rural Sports Fields. Can we have some clarification on these two budgetary items, please?

HON. P.K. BALA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. For the first one, Rural Sports Fields, we have been allocated \$400,000 and as the Honourable Assistant Minister highlighted in his Budget response, this grant is for Namosi, Naitasiri, Lomolomo in Lautoka, Serua and Ra. So we will take four or five playgrounds per year in and year out, and for Kadavu, you put in your request.

For the Construction of Rural Sports Complexes, it has been appearing in the budget for a few years and this is the famous Vunisea Sports Complex. When we went for the Budget presentation, the Honourable Attorney-General and Minister for Economy directed the Permanent Secretary for Youth, the staff from the Construction and Implementation Unit and staff from the Ministry of Infrastructure to visit the site and come up with a concrete proposal, the way forward for this project. When the team came back, they gave a report, and the very first thing that needs to be done is the drainage work. That is why you will see that the allocation has been given and out of that, \$353,000 will be used for the drainage works. So, what we need to do is to get the drainage in place before we continue with the project. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Tuisawau, you have the floor to move your motion on Head 25-2-1(10).

HON. RO F. TUISAWAU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, SEG 10 - Rural Sports Fields (\$400,000), I move: That \$600,000 is added to make it \$1 million.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Is there a seconder?

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- I second the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Tuisawau, you have the floor.

HON. RO F. TUISAWAU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, sports is very important for our youth as the Government understands, especially the Honourable Minister. For us who are involved in sports in the rural areas, one of the main impediments is the ground. It is not expensive, we are not asking for synthetic ground or something like the National Stadium, but it involves just drainage, levelling the field and maybe just another level at the top, and basic facilities such as taps and a toilet. I am speaking from my perspective for the Rewa Rugby Union.

The other issue with sports grounds, I am explaining my situation but it applies to a lot of sporting associations that are rural-based, we do not have access to big grounds. Even the Ratu Cakobau Park is fully booked a lot of times by the Fiji Football Association, which is why I am asking that you reconsider that and increase it. In responding to my colleague sitting in the front row here you mentioned about four or five provinces that will be catered, but you forgot those of us sitting at the back, and I am asking if you could increase that to \$600,000.

The other thing is we are enjoying and benefitting from Sevens Rugby, and if you look at the Sevens players pathways, a lot of them started from the rural areas, running and playing on these grounds. Thank you for the contribution towards Sevens Rugby, but I was wondering the value which they bring to our country in terms of marketing could be reciprocated through developing from where they started. That is why I am asking for that, and I am sure this is just one which you can say, 'yes'. You have said 'no' to everything, but this is one which we could agree on and say, 'yes'. Just \$600,000 and make it \$1 million. Thank you.

MR CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. Since we came into this House in 2014, time and again we have been saying that this Government is here for every Fijian. We have never said that we are for this province or for that province.

As I have said in my statement that year in, year out, we will be doing four to five playgrounds. So, in a four-year term, definitely we will have 20 or 30 playgrounds done. It is so simple. Maybe it is not expensive for him, but I can tell him to do a playground is an expensive exercise. He is just saying, "Just take the bulldozer, grade it, and that is it." It does not work like that, we do not do shortcuts!

Mr. Chairman, Sir, he can be rest assured as I have said, that year-in-year-out, we will be doing four to five playgrounds and if their proposal is with us, then we will look into it. But there is no point in doing an amendment motion and asking that we should increase that allocation. It will make no sense, let me be very blunt. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Gavoka, you have the floor.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Yes, I would like to contribute to the debate. What my colleague is saying is quite true because some major teams today are playing in schools grounds. These are teams that are in the top eight or top ten in the country.

This issue has come up in numerous times over the last four years. If the Honourable Minister is saying that they will be building four or five every year, where are the 16 grounds that you have built over the last term? Where are they? Can you identify them? Because I really have not seen anything, other than upgrading or resurfacing of some major grounds in the rural areas, which is not only for rugby, it is for everyone; soccer and hockey or whatever? I do not think I have seen 16 grounds. If we go four for a year and your term was four years in the last four years, there should be 16 grounds built. Where are they, can you show us? It looks like typical FijiFirst, lots of promises, poor delivery. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am not denying that we are not going to carry out the works. What I have said is that year-in-year-out we will take four to five, who knows maybe if there are more proposals we can consider. But right now the plan is to carry out four to five playgrounds every year. I do not know what has happened in the past, definitely there were some grounds done, but I am talking about the future, the Ministry's plan in regards to rural playgrounds. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Prime Minister, you have the floor.

HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.- Mr. Chairman, if I can just make a quick contribution. Honourable Gavoka said he has not seen any grounds because he has not gone around the country. They are building one in Kadavu, they are building one in Gau, they just finished one at Marist Brother's High School. As soon as they did that one, we knew that that would cater for the Suva area. We had extensive work done trying to build one in Naitasiri, but we found out there was not enough firm ground to put a playground. To say that he has not seen any ground around the country, it is because he has not gone around the country.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Very poor.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will now vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	21
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	3

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, the House will now vote on Head 25, that the amount of Head 25 - Ministry of Youths and Sports be approved.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of 'Ayes' and 'Noes')

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	27
Noes	:	20
Not Voted	:	4

Head 25 agreed to.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, before we move onto the next agenda item, I just like to remind all Honourable Members, you are entitled to several interventions but sort out your material, which one is most important. I will give two interventions from the same Member. You will not get three or four, so do not try your luck. Sort out your material and we will play on because if you think I am ignoring you, I am not ignoring you. You have a part to play and I have a part to play.

Head 26 - Higher Education Institutions

MR CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, Head 26, Programme 1, Activity 1.

(Chorus of Noes)

HON.V.R. GAVOKA.- Mr. Chairman, if I can just ask the Honourable Minister to provide some edification on these Technical Colleges. There is Montfort Technical Institute, Sangam Institute of Technology, these come under technical centre. We are all trying to raise or create a lot of technical people within our community, and I see a lot of technical colleges in here. Are their programmes harmonised, do they all do the same thing or how do they relate to the needs of the industries in Fiji? What process do you follow? There are many plans here providing the kind of training. I would like to believe that the programmes are harmonised that they do the same thing relative to the needs of the industry. Can you provide some edification on this, please, Honourable Minister. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. R.S. AKBAR.- Mr. Chair, I am sure you are not talking about the Ministry of Education Technical Colleges that are now being transferred to FNU, you are talking about the other technical colleges that you have named, namely Montfort, Swami Vivekananda Technical College and the Sangam Institute of Technology.

Mr. Chair, through you, these institutions are fully accredited institutions and they come under the Fiji Higher Education Commission that has an approved funding model and they offer National Certificate Courses. I am not able to provide you the exact details of the courses that are provided, but these technical colleges provide National Certificate Courses for the students.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Mikaele Leawere, you have the floor.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just looking at Head 26 in terms of Centre for Appropriate Technology and Development, Corpus Christi, Fulton College and Montfort, I would request the Honourable Minister for some clarification as to the reduction in the Budget. For example, at Montfort Boy's Town, the equipment are so obsolete or so old and they need assistance. This reduction will not assist them in terms of having the appropriate equipment for the students. And also for Corpus Christi and Fulton College, in terms of their administration cost and how do they carry out their functions with the reduction in their budget? Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. R.S. AKBAR.- Mr. Chair, the Government provides operational grants. We have seen a decrease in the number of enrolments, so the decrease in the allocation to these institutions have been based on the number of students that are enrolled in these institutions.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Ro Filipe Tuisawau, you have the floor.

HON. RO F. TUISAWAU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Honourable Minister, two queries on USP. Could you please update the House on the outcome of recent USP Council discussions on abuse of office at USP and the position of the Fiji Government on that? The other issue is on Fulton College regarding the contribution there, they have moved to Nadi, and since we are contributing to them an explanation on what is happening to the assets which are sitting in Tailevu (towards Korovou) which are not being utilised? Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Attorney-General, you have the floor.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Mr. Chair, through you if I could bring to the attention of the Honourable Member, any investigation by USP Council is within the domain of the USP Council. We do not run the USP Council, they carry out their own affairs. If there has been any report to any independent body then again there is a due process to it and they need to go through that process. It is not prudent for us to comment on that.

In respect of Fulton College, as you know the lease in Tailevu had expired so obviously the land is reverted to the landowners and the buildings are there, so it is up to them to do what they like with it. The Fulton College, this is up in Sabeto has obviously moved to a better side of Viti Levu, it is in the Western Division now. There has been decreases as highlighted by the Honourable Minister, the numbers have dropped in some of these institutions. In Fulton's case, it has been the operational efficiency that they have gained, but to answer the question by Honourable Gavoka earlier on, some of these colleges, for example, Montfort, they do carpentry, automotive, mechanical works and cabinet making. If you look at the one in Savusavu, the numbers there have dropped quite significantly, a lot of them are preferring to go to the Government Technical Colleges. So, the Government Technical College, for example, the one in Labasa we actually provide buses. They catch the bus to go there and a lot of them are preferring that, so there has been a lot of adjustments.

In terms of the actual grants, you will see all of them have had a reduction including our own National University with FNU and a lot of it is based upon our consultations with the Fiji Higher Education

Commission that does assessments on these universities depending on the number of courses that they have, depending on the capital infrastructure they require, depending on the number of lectures and tutors they have, and they actually got a formula. The New Zealand government has funded part of the Fiji Higher Education Commission's work, they are doing a study and further fine-tuning in terms of the allocations that should be made and what modules need to be used. And within the module itself, you have various determinants and what weight needs to be given to those determinants and then we actually have the funding that has been allocated for that. So, we are going through a transitional phase but that is how these figures have actually come about.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Lynda Tabuya, you have the floor.

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- Thank you, Mr. Chair. To the Honourable Minister, under SEG 10 the allocation for capital projects, as the Minister would know there is a huge problem at the moment of lack of accommodation for our university students. And I hear that even some of the spaces for classrooms or for teaching in FNU are currently used for accommodation. So, they are pressed for space at the complex here in Samabula. This allocation, what are the plans to deal with this urgent need for accommodation and housing for students not just at FNU but the other institutions including the University of the South Pacific.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- The capital works for FNU involves the maritime academy. If you drive pass the maritime academy, it is near completion. It involves the FNU Veterinary Laboratory, the Hospital and Instructional Livestock Shed in Koronivia, FNU Nasinu Campus (there is a lot of work going around there too). The FNU Labasa Campus will be an enormous boost, not just for the Labasa economy but also in respect of ease of convenience for students in Vanua Levu, and there are various other smaller FNU capital projects.

In respect of housing and this is one of the reasons we announced at the Budget that we prefer students and for them to be eligible for TELS they need to stay where they come from. For example, I live with my parents in Nadi and there is a hospitality course available at the Nadi Campus. We want them to do it in Nadi because then they can stay from home and go to the campus. Not come to Suva because in Suva there is already a shortage of accommodation. That is the rationale behind it. So, there is a lot of pressure on the infrastructure regarding accommodation but be rest assured, the FNU Council (the new Council) together with the Vice-Chancellor they have a number of projects in place or proposals regarding accommodation. They are also looking at working with the private sector and how they can actually provide accommodation in that respect.

HON. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Bulitavu, you have the floor.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Mr. Chair, Sir. Just on the grant, I do not see any grant going to the Vanua Levu Arya Centre and Nadogo Technical College.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- The what?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- No grant allocated for the Vanua Levu Arya Samaj Technical College and also the Nadogo Technical College, why is it?

HON. R.S. AKBAR.- It is going to FNU.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- These are the technical colleges. So, if you look at the SEG, it says Technical College of Fiji so that used to be there. Now that is going to go to FNU and that \$6.8 million, we have again reduced the amount because now a lot of the administrative cost, et cetera, will be absorbed by the mainstream FNU administration, and then, of course, that funding will go to all the different 13 or 15 technical colleges around Fiji.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you, Honourable Members, we have discussed this Activity enough. The Parliament will now vote on Head 26, that the amount of Head 26 - Higher Education Institutions, be approved.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of 'Ayes' and 'Noes')

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	27
Noes	:	21
Not Voted	:	3

Head 26 agreed to.

Head 30 - Ministry of Agriculture

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, the floor is now open for debate on Head 30: Programme 1, Activity 1. Honourable Gavoka, you have the floor.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Yes, Honourable Chair, if I could ask the Minister on SEG 10, regarding the Agriculture Marketing Authority (AMA). Can he give us an indication of how AMA motivates the farmer to grow what the market needs? They are buyers, they buy from the farmers. I just want to know in advance what they want to buy and that the farmer has been primed to provide a crop that AMA can market. It is the whole food chain thing, I just want to know how does AMA handle this?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Mr. Chair, the biggest motivation that AMA provides is that "we will buy your produce from your farm gate". There are areas that AMA picks from, we are actually re-looking at the whole operation of AMA, but at the moment, we do not want AMA to compete with other exporters who are also picking up produce from the farm gate. There are a lot of exporters who are picking up, they have their own transportation system timetable, so if in these areas AMA does not get there, AMA is not supposed to go and collect produce from around Suva or around Nadi, Lautoka, et cetera.

AMA will go and pick up produce in those areas where:

- i) The exporters are not doing it because it is not economical for them to go and pick up three bags of *dalo* or 5 bags of cassava, et cetera.
- ii) The exporters will not go and pick produce from Kadavu and the Yasawas, et cetera, because it is not economical for them. AMA will do that, AMA will go and pick it up, so the biggest motivation that AMA gives to the farmer is that you produce, we will pick it up from your farm gate; we will pay you cash when we collect it.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you, Honourable Ro Filipe Tuisawau, you have the floor.

HON. RO F. TUISAWAU.- Mr. Chairman, Sir, thank you to the Honourable Minister for that explanation, I think AMA plays a critical part in the value chain from the farmers to the market, especially for our rural farmers from the villages. It is quite a substantial amount that we look at SEGs 6 and 10, totalling \$7.4 million, just a question on their Annual Report.

Secondly, I see that they are running commercial operations. In Nausori, they have really good food outlet there, selling fish and also it is a cafeteria. Is there any new sort of business in the Annual

Report to include, not only the expenditure but also income, and whether these are viable commercial operations? Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Yes, Agriculture Marketing Authority (AMA) has its own business plan. AMA has a Board. At the moment, I have had one, two meetings with AMA. The second meeting I had with AMA and Food Processors Fiji Limited (FPFL) about three to four weeks ago, to streamline their activities so that they stick to their core business. We want AMA to do what it is supposed to do which is to collect the produce and get it to the yard. From there, Food Processors Fiji Limited will pick it up, there are exporters who are in the export business. We want AMA to stick to its core business. We do not want AMA to diversify into areas where others are doing it. So, we are re-looking at the whole business model. We want to really revamp Food Processors Fiji Limited so that they pick up all these produce from AMA or from others who would get it to them. So overall, the whole idea is to send this signal to the farmers that you do not have to worry about how to dispose your product. We will buy it and we will pay you at the farm gate.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Kuridrani, you have the floor to move your motion on Head 30: Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 6.

HON. I. KURIDRANI.- Mr. Chairman, Sir, I move the motion for Navuso Agriculture Technical Institute on Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 6, to be increased by \$484,730 to \$1 million.

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- Honourable Chair, I second the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Kuridrani, you have the floor.

HON. I. KURIDRANI.- Mr. Chairman, Sir, I understand that we are currently facing a situation where there are less people, less farmers going into agriculture. At the moment, that has been the very big reason for the reduction in agriculture productivity.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, if you want to revive agriculture, we need to start right from the education of young people to go into farming business, so I believe the increase of the allocation for Navuso Agriculture Technical Institute will greatly help these young farmers to educate them into farming business.

The Navuso Agriculture Technical Institute has the resources, Mr. Chairman, Sir, as far as the land is concerned for development, to establish a better institution for agriculture. It is ideally located on a flat land beside the river and this can be a potential area to develop young farmers into vegetable farming, livestock farming, crops farming as well as fish farming. That is the reason I believe that we need to put more resources into the establishment to improve the Navuso Agriculture Technical Institute for our future generation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Leawere, you have the floor.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just in support of that motion, Navuso is synonymous with agriculture as everyone knows. Right from the beginning, there are a lot of our boys or students who were raised from there, they have been very successful in life and going back to Navuso, I was just wondering if there is a plan like what the Government has already highlighted in terms of agriculture in schools. We can start from primary and then Navuso and then something like the Fiji College of Agriculture which is now part of the Fiji National University (FNU) so that pathway can be created to make our students more successful in life in terms of having to utilise the land. And when we look at what

the agriculture sector is producing, it is not enough because we do not have the necessary knowledge from our students, right from primary level to secondary level then to tertiary level. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Aseri Radrodro, you have the floor.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. I speak in support of the motion, especially the need for food security that the Government is proposing to venture into. I think by increasing the concentration of grant to Navuso Agriculture Technical Institute will also fall in line with their 12 months agriculture programme that they had introduced where every student who will graduate from that programme to receive \$2,000 cash start-up, and a loan of \$78,000.

They were supposed to do it from FNU, but I think increasing the grant to Navuso Agriculture School will also assist the School to train those students and become accessible to that Programme. In terms of the pathway for students like the Honourable Minister for Education had mentioned yesterday, that they were trying to initiate Government Schools having their own farms, and this is one area that a student from Navuso to contribute in terms of growing the agriculture sectors through their participation in the school farms and the likes. Yes, I fully agree with the motion, Honourable Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. Let me just clarify a few things to the Honourable Members, definitely, this assistance to Navuso Agricultural School was because of the concern for the need to train replacement farmers, particularly, youths to come into farming.

But let me also tell the Honourable Members on the other side that there is an existing agreement between Government through the Ministry of Agriculture and the Navuso Agricultural School, similar to the arrangement that we have with Tutu. This is a replication of Tutu and we wanted to move it out from Vanua Levu because it concentrated on the farmers of Cakaudrove, Bua and Macuata, so that it can involve probably the whole of Fiji through Navuso. So there is an agreement and further assistance, the same applies for Tutu, because this is Government's taxpayers' money, they have responsibilities and they have also made commitments.

One of the major commitments that Navuso made was to come out of the academic stream that they were in, because before this assistance started a few years ago, Honourable Chairman, Sir, they were running I think up to Form 4 level or Form 5, but then this is part of the agreement. They have to over time transfer those students to other schools nearby through the zoning in the Ministry of Education and then before it becomes the full Agricultural Technical College similar to Tutu.

But, in terms of assistances, Honourable Chairman, Sir, Government has done a lot for Navuso Agricultural School to turn it around from where it was, even starting with the living accommodations. Honourable Chairman, Sir, Navuso was neglected. For us to start this whole scheme, the Government had to go and start from the accommodation blocks, everything. Then we started giving them farming implements like a brand new tractor, a brand new digger. If I am correct, the Honourable Minister of Agriculture can attest to this, I was informed that even last year, they have been given a truck because of the value chain. This is part of a long term plan by Government and the Ministry, it is not only about Navuso, but it is about using Navuso as a model in terms of farm mechanisation and the training of replacement farmers for the future. So it is not only like Tutu, it is not for Methodists only. Tutu accepts all forms of beliefs, religions to come to Tutu and it is about the surrounding areas as well. Navuso can be used for the model farm and there are also plans, I am not sure about this, to even improve their dairy and their piggeries.

Navuso used to operate three milking sheds during its prime days, but all gone. Now it has been revived and I think they are operating with one now, so lots of thanks. So Government has invested more than millions of dollars into Navuso, but what I wanted to say, Honourable Chairman, Sir, there is an agreement and that agreement needs to be honoured because Navuso has to play its part and this is made known to the Methodist Church as well. We know that Methodist in the US also wanted to come in, but Government has clearly laid out the conditions. One of the things why Tutu is so successful is because of the way the management is structured. It is out of the control of Suva, and that has been the agreement too for Navuso. I just wanted to clarify that, and maybe the Honourable Minister can add to what I have stated, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Minister for Agriculture, you have the floor.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Yes, Chair, a quick point, when I visited both Tutu and Navuso, I think Tutu early this year or last year, Navuso about couple of months ago, I had a good meeting with them. Honourable Nawaikula and a few others were harping about Tutu model, but they fail to realise that the Tutu model is a Navuso Model.

Navuso came first, Tutu borrowed the Navuso model, and that is what we have at Navuso now, they select students who have land, the students are trained and then they are assisted and they go back and work on their land. Sir, 60 students are graduating out of Navuso, these are the young budding Agriculture Entrepreneurs, and we are going to work with them. I have asked them to give us the entire database of the 60 students, where they are; where they originate from? I said we are training the students, but if you want the students to be successful we also have to go back in the middle, to their areas and educate the villages out there, the *turaga ni koro* and the village Chief that this guy who is going to return to that area we want him or her to be a successful Agriculture Entrepreneur. All of you will have to assist him or her.

Sir, it is not just to train this young youth here and send them back and that is it, the game is over, No! We are getting the database of the 60 students who are coming out in November under our Commercial Farming Scheme that we launched last year. We are going to adapt them, and we are getting the database so that before they go in November, our area Technical Officers will go and prepare the land and get it ready. So that is how we are going to deal with that. As the Honourable Minister had alluded to earlier on, we handed over a truck, I met with them to discuss how we are going to work very closely with Navuso to ensure that every student that comes out of there are successful young business Agriculture Entrepreneurs.

This money that we are giving is over and above the teaching staff that we are paying; Government is paying the teaching staff, it is over and above that. So they need to understand that we are there, they came out of this Agriculture Programme and they were ending high school there 2 years ago. Now, they have abandoned their entire technical agriculture scheme, now they are getting back because we all got back and said, 'look, we need this infrastructure, we want this in our programme', because we have this vision about establishing and bringing in young, trained entrepreneurs. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will now vote on this amendment.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	20
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	4

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will now suspend proceedings for refreshments in the Committee Room. When we resume, Honourable Bulitavu, you will move your motion on Head 30-1-1(10). We adjourn for half an hour. Thank you Honourable Members.

The Parliament adjourned at 10.39 a.m.

The Parliament resumed at 11.13 a.m.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, this session is called to order. I give the floor to Honourable Bulitavu to move his motion. You have the floor Sir.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you Mr. Chairman Sir, I move that Head 30, Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 10, on Agriculture Marketing Authority (AMA) - Capital Grant, to be increased by \$2 million.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Is there a seconder?

HON. I. KURIDRANI.- I second the motion, Mr. Chairman, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Bulitavu, you have the floor.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you Mr. Chairman, Sir, after hearing the Honourable Minister this morning and his answers on the AMA, I think this is a very important component of grassroot agriculture in our rural areas because it brings the market closer to the farmers, and also the farm gate and farm gate prices. There is a real need to improve and upgrade the facilities given the inconsistent pick up by AMA on various farms, sometimes they do not arrive on time and also the stiff competition provided by other private business people who come to buy crops.

But the idea of pouring \$2 million into this capital project is to build collection centres in those various areas to make it shorter and also secure a market closer to the various districts and also in the province. You can have about four or five collection centres. Also government to subsidise transport costs to allow farmers to bring their produce to the market, given that this will go together with the idea that government had mooted early in regards to clustering farmers and how farmers could meet the weekly quota of AMA in having their produce that will be sent to the market.

Not only that, given that Fiji imports more from overseas, this is a way of how we can reduce our imports by more agriculture participation in our rural areas, better utilisation of land and also creating new ventures in the rural areas, not only for the proceeds that farmers will get from this, it will improve their economic and social status, improve their housing standards and also they can move into other platforms like cooperative in the village on how the cultural setup will help the idea of *solesolevaki* on how to improve our rural dwellers and village dwellers, landowners and their economic status. That is why we need to increase or the motion is seeking to increase this by \$2 million to build collection centres that will make it easier for farmers to access the market. *Vinaka vakalevu* Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you, Honourable Member. Honourable Aseri Radrodro, you have the floor.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you Mr. Chairman, I speak in support of the proposed increase just to ensure that accessibility of farmers to the work of Agriculture Marketing Authority needs to be at an easy, available space. I think at the moment, most of the produce just brought straight up to Nausori and even from the respective divisions and respective areas around Fiji, especially in terms of dalo, yaqona and all the produce that has been purchased and acquired by the Agriculture Marketing Authority.

In certain instances in the past, most of the products that are purchased by Agriculture Marketing Authority because of the distances and because of the unavailability of regular transportation, there seems to be a lot of obsolete items when they come to the desired destination, it is unusable. Therefore there is a need to probably establish certain offices in the divisions, Northern Division, Western Division, in addition to the existing divisions, and further from that then you can go down to the respective *tikina* or the

respective districts to ensure that the accessibility of AMA to the respective farm equipment and farm products and crops are done on a quicker turnaround time. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Mr. Chairman, I think this motion is totally misplaced. They have no idea how many collection centres we have at the moment, and where they are located. We have it in the Western Division, Central Division, Northern Division.

(Honourable Member interjected)

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Listen, *wawa!* What they should ask for is if they want to put some logic would be more operational grant rather than a capital grant because we already have enough collection centres. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	21
Noes	:	27
Not voted	:	3

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Activity 2, Honourable Leawere, you have the floor.

HON. M.K. LEAWERE.- Thank you Mr. Chairman, just a clarification from the Honourable Minister in terms of SEG 8 - On-going Agriculture Partnership Project in the Highlands (Ba, Naitasiri and Navosa). What are these projects and can we have some indication of the names or places where these projects are going to be?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Mr. Chairman, this is a loan funded Programme called Park. It has been on-going for the past two years. This Programme is targeted to assist famers in the production and marketing of high valued crops, so the entire value chain is mapped out. To map out the entire value chain, that particular Unit is under training and also establishing resources right from the farm gate to the market. There are selected areas and three areas are Nadarivatu, Navosa and Naitasiri. These are the three areas where the famers in clusters are developed and assisted. I can give them the list of the areas later on.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Matanitobua, you have the floor.

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- Programme 1, Activity 2, SEG (7), National Agriculture Census (\$4,500,000), can the Honourable Minister enlighten the house on the National Agriculture Census? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Mr. Chairman, the Government has allocated money for this Agriculture Census that will be undertaken this year.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Census for what, famers or...?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- National Agriculture Census. You know what is Census?.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Yes.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Collection of data on a particular thematic area at a particular point in time. So it could be a population Census, Household Income and Expenditure Census, this is Agriculture Census.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- What is it; these are ongoing processes?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- These are all data in respect to all agriculture, number of farmers, types of farmers, number of goats and number of cattle....

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Meandering

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you, Honourable Members. Honourable Kuridrani, you have the floor.

HON. I. KURIDRANI.- Mr. Chairman, I have read the Agriculture Census for 2009, and what I noticed is the absence of ethnicity in the data. I believe Mr. Chairman, if you want to target where the problem is we need that ethnicity. If I can request the Honourable Minister to include the ethnicity into this year's Census because otherwise we will be just generalising the issue. We need to target the customer. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

(Chorus of interjections)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Sir, policy making in agriculture is to help advance agriculture sector, it is nothing to do with the particular ethnic group.

HON. MEMBER.- Yes, it does.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- I think they need to get out of this ethnic mindset.

HON. MEMBER.- Because there is a difference between a lessee and a landowner.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- We will move on, Activity 3, Honourable Professor Biman Prasad, you have the floor.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to help the Honourable Minister answer other question, but as I have said before, I have always been very passionate about research extension and information within the agriculture sector.

My question to the Honourable Minister, and I think he knows it very well that research extension and information go together, and one of the problems we have had in the non-sugar crop sectors of the economy over the last so many years is the erosion of the strength that we had in research, extension, training and information services. I am kind of disappointed that there is a reduction in the budget in those areas. My question to the Honourable Minister, is that enough and what are his plans to make sure this becomes the central focus? Because if you want to promote non-sugar crop sectors, livestock and others, then I think extension support which in my view has eroded very significantly over the last so many years that farmers are struggling to adapt to new technologies, new information, new ways of doing farming, marketing, et cetera. So, Mr. Chairman, I think it would be of interest to everyone in the country if the

Honourable Minister can explain what are some of the initiatives and whether allocating more would be a better approach to enhancing agriculture generally.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Mr. Chairman, I do not blame the Honourable Member for asking this question because through some degree there is a perception that not much is happening in agriculture. Sir, that is absolutely not correct. I think the issue there is a disjoint between research and the farmer. I think that link is a bit weak, and that needs to be improved. That is something that I am working with the Extension Team. I have told them that if it does not improve, then we will have to give a small test to our Extension Officers because if we have developed and released a new variety and if an Extension Officer is not aware of the importance and the new attributes of this new variety, then how will he or she impart that knowledge to the farmer and bring about a change? So that is probably a new thing that we are going to do. In every six months, we will do a kind of test to our own staff, that they have this new knowledge that we have developed so that they can impart that.

Now, going back to research, as I said, there is a lot of research happening. Research relates to getting new breeds in the livestock sector, new varieties of crop in the crops sector and not only that, we also have to purify the existing seeds that we have, the varieties that were released 10 years ago. For example, the *maleka* rice variety. Over six, seven, eight to ten years, this variety becomes adulterated because there is a lot of mixing at the farm level. So we need to also purify the seeds and in 10 years later, we need to again give a new set of seeds for that particular variety because farmers lose the actual variety that was released. So that is happening on an ongoing basis.

Just about four weeks ago in Madhuvani, Rakiraki, we released two new varieties of rice. Initially it was brought from the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), and then we did our own breeding programme. It is now ready, and we released it. It is a huge, marked, improved variety in terms of the yield, given the existing varieties that we have.

We also have research in respect to soil agronomy practices. In two months' time, we will be releasing the seeds of the *mucuna* creeper, the nitrogen-fixing crop. It not only fixes nitrogen, but also improves the soil quality so that there is reduction of fertiliser utilisation, as well as an improvement in soil quality.

We also have research in the interest of pest and disease management. We are revamping our Entomology Section and Plant Protection Section. The quality of staff we have is one of the best if you compare it with any other Ministry. We probably have the highest number of PhD holders in the Ministry of Agriculture. So I understand the Honourable Member's sentiment, there is a perception issue, and we are going to improve that perception going forward.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Mr. Chairman, very, very quickly, Programme 1, Activity 3 is just on Research - Headquarters, but you will see in Programme 2, Activity 3, that is research on Crops. We also have research for Livestock in Programme 3, Activity 3. So there is more allocation for research.

I must also mention here, Mr. Chairman, Sir, that I had briefed the Honourable Minister this morning before we touched on this that the Australian Council for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) is coming with a lot of projects, starting mid-last year to work in partnership with our Research.

In the recent meeting with Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs and Women, the Senator Marise Payne, did indicate about these initiatives of Australia and that is what I briefed the Honourable Minister

this morning, that in her next visit to Fiji which will be next month, she intends to spend a day in the Ministry of Agriculture to look at this partnership and opportunities for more. Thank you, Mr. Chairman..

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Ratu Naiqama Lalabalavu, you have the floor.

HON. RATU N.T. LALABALAVU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, perhaps, I seek clarification from the Honourable Minister as well regarding this drop in your budget on research.

As you had stated in your Budget speech and also that was made by the Honourable Minister for Economy in his Right of Reply, the focus now is more towards the increase in income and the effect of urbanisation. So the result of that is the decrease in the agriculture sector in terms of its contribution to the GDP and you may argue about that, I understand, Honourable Minister. But having said that and having heard you just a while ago on the research programmes that you have highlighted and alluded to by your predecessor, I seek clarification. Are there any other new things that you would be able to put in as part of this research programme to prepare us in our endeavour towards commercial farming, like flower. This is a very interesting sector of agriculture.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- You are talking about flour as in wheat or flower as in flora?

HON. RATU N.T. LALABALAVU.- Flower as an export, as a cash kind of crop.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Are you talking about wheat crop?

HON. RATU N.T. LALABALAVU.- No, flower as in flora.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Member, do not carry on a conversation between you two.

HON. RATU N.T. LALABALAVU.- I am sorry, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- It is through the Chairman. Ask your question, Honourable Member, and I will get the Minister to answer.

HON. RATU N.T. LALABALAVU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir.

We have just returned from a trip to China and floral flower is their lucrative export now. In Israel, they even have a company of their own known, Agrexco, and they market flowers to the European Union to cut off supplies from New Zealand and Australia. It is a very lucrative one for us. We, on this side of the House, seek some clarification on that, Sir. Do you include this as part of your research programme on other new areas for us to pursue rather than the usual ones that we concentrate on?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Mr. Chairman, flower comes under the broader group of crops known as horticultural crops and we do undertake research on horticultural crops. Flower, at the moment, is at cottage level. We have a separate allocation for cottage industries. We have a programme where we promote, particularly women in the cottage industry and we have an allocation for that. We have just got a paper done on how we would want to go to every town and assist them in establishing this flower cottage industry, from their farms to the market.

We have not really thought at that level of export sector. I think we are really busy looking at high-valued crops which has got huge margins. Whenever you talk about a crop, you need to ensure that you look at the annual margin. For example, sometimes people start comparing *dalo* and kava, but they fail to

understand that we need to scale down kava return to annual basis and then we can compare. When you compare kava with rice, you need to look at a price where we can have three crops in a year and then compare with kava which is a three-year crop, scale it down to three-months level and then compare the net return. So these kinds of comparisons need to be done before you really jump up and say, "Look, we need to get into flower, et cetera." I think we need to do our economic analysis well before we start promoting to farmers at commercial level.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Aseri Radrodro, you have the floor.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a clarification on SEG 5 - Lab Proficiency Fees (\$18,500) and Lab Accreditation Fees (\$36,000), and whether the facility regarding OHS Expenses is expenses for compliance?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- SEG 5, I think this is accreditation fee. Our Labs that we have at Koronivia, at the moment, we are trying to get it accredited internationally. What we have at the USP Lower Campus that is an internationally accredited Lab. So this fee is for that particular accreditation.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Qereqeretabua, you have the floor.

HON. L.S. QEREQERETABUA.- Thank you, Honourable Chairman.

Honourable Chairman, through you, I would just like to ask the Honourable Minister for Agriculture if there is any new research being planned into breadfruit flour, f-l-o-u-r, *uto* or *kulu*, like my western '*Tau*' like to call it?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Yes, Chairman, we had gone past that stage. The research was done some time back, there is enough knowledge on that. Our staff attended training in Indonesia on developing flour out of breadfruit. We have machines, we have been running courses on training farmers how to make flour out of breadfruit. We, in fact, just recently gave one machine to Tutu Agriculture College to make flour out of breadfruit there, and they can also run courses in Taveuni for farmers.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Members, Activity 4?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Honourable Chairman, are we going to do the motions later? I have two motions in Activity 2.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Which Activity 2 are you talking about?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Programme 2-2, I submitted two motions. Are we going to do them later?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- We have not gone to Programme 2 yet, we are on Programme 1-4.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Mr. Chairman, on SEG 7 - Agriculture Show (\$100,000), is it spread all over the country in terms of this budgetary allocation?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- There is one major Agriculture Show coming up from 3rd July to 5th July that will be held at the Valelevu Grounds. In addition to that, there will be smaller shows held around Fiji, but this is the main one that we have once a year.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Just further to that, Mr. Chairman, there used to be agricultural shows conducted in schools in the four Divisions. We are talking about agriculture as their pathway so that can be where the students are motivated to use up the land, starting from the schools. With the Honourable Minister for Education listening in, that can be done and we can have that in the four Divisions with all the schools to participate. It is just a suggestion, Mr. Chairman, to the Honourable Minister, thank you.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- We normally do that in collaboration with FNU, when FNU have their Open Day and the Agriculture College has an extensive outfit to showcase. That is the time they also pitch in and do that when schools visit. We really cannot have these kinds of activities where you pull students off the school system. It takes a lot of time and expenses.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- We will move on. Honourable Members, Activity 4?

(Chorus of 'Noes')

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Programme 2, Activity 1?

HON. S.R. RASOVA.- Mr Chairman, on SEG 7 – Taveuni Coconut Centre. Can we have clarification from the Minister responsible, can he update us on some of the coconut industry in Savusavu, Taveuni, Lau, Kadavu, Thank you.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Mr. Chairman, through you, can I ask the honourable Member when was the last time he visited, I believe he is talking about Mua Research Station in Taveuni. When was the last time you visited the place?

HON. S.R. RASOVA.- Sorry, Honourable Minister. I am from Kadavu, I am not from Taveuni.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Honourable Chair, we have turned that place around. If you visit the place now it has totally been cleaned up. We have now about 40,000 seedlings brought from there to the Western Division; for entire Vanua Levu, the copra millers are looking after. They have a separate grant to establish new plantations, replace the aging trees and the senile trees. But we have revamped the Mua Research Station and it is now one of the tier one research stations that we have. We have looked at all the research stations. We have segregated them in terms of tier one, tier two and tier three, and then we have given them clear direction into how we want all research stations to become tier one in terms of operational efficiency. Mua now is one of tier one with Sigatoka, Legalega tier two, Legalega is going to come up to where it used to be some time back. We have profiled all the research stations, just two months ago and within a month Mua has turned around. We have a new leader, Honourable Lalabalavu knows that leader, he talked about that person the last time and it is a very dynamic person whose heading that station.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Programme 2, Activity 1. Honourable Gavoka, you have the floor to move your motion. Head 30 – Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG 8.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- My apologies, Honourable Chair. I was a little ahead of the programme this morning. I move that the provision in SEG 8 - Sigatoka Valley Farming Programme be increased by \$1 million.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Is there a seconder?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- I second, Mr. Chairman, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Gavoka, you have the floor.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you, Mr Chairman. We all know about the Sigatoka Valley. It used to be known as the “Salad Bowl of Fiji”, but not living up to its former glory. We have built a collection centre in Vatumali in Keyasi, the Nadroga Provincial Council, but we have problems with production.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Member, SEG 8 says “Maintenance of Existing Rural Offices and Staff Quarters”. It has got nothing to do with Sigatoka Valley Farming Programme. It is in your writing.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- It is Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 8.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You are looking at Activity 2. We are still on Activity 1.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- But I was given time to speak on my motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- That is what it says here. But there is no Activity 2.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- My error perhaps.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- We are still on Activity 1.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Activity 1, alright.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- We move on to Activity 2. Honourable Gavoka, you have the floor.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Sir, I move that the Sigatoka Valley Farming Programme under SEG 8 be increased by \$1 million.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Is there a seconder?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- I second the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor, Honourable Gavoka.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- That area, Honourable Chairman, has been identified up in the Navosa highlands as suitable for carrot farming. We import a huge amount of carrots every year into Fiji. I do not have the exact figure, but the distributor that he worked with who is the equivalent of AMA up in the highlands has identified this area together with experts from Australia that it can be an ideal location area for carrot farming.

Honourable Chairman, in my address on the Budget I spoke about critical mass and I think that area is suitable for carrots to be grown on a critical mass basis. We have about seven *tikina* up there who are part of our initiative, the move to engage the youth in productive farming and this is one productive sector.

In my question to the Honourable Minister earlier on, I had asked about how AMA motivates the farmers on their buying. We have a company that can identify exactly what needs to be grown that has a market two or three months down the line, and that is a kind of targeting that we need to have. We now have the collection centre, but I am afraid to say that it is not living up to its full expectation. So we need crops like this, crops that are in demand, crops that are imported impacting our import bill. I would ask the Ministry to look into this. The land is ideal, the collection centre is there, the infrastructure is there, it is a matter of applying what needs to be applied to start this on a scale that will make Fiji self-sufficient in carrots. Thank you Honourable Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Tikoduadua, you have the floor.

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- Thank you Honourable Chairman. Honourable Chairman, this issue is raised before the Minister, still on Programme 2, Activity 2 – Extension Services.

Honourable Chairman, we have seen SEG 8 and SEG 10, a list of various support programmes listed as Agro Input Subsidy showing an amount of \$400,000. Now I assume here, Honourable Chairman, that this is for agricultural inputs like weedicides, herbicides, water pumps et cetera, to farmers.

I think the Honourable Minister knows this. I am raising this issue because the effectiveness of this particular policy and how it impacts the farmers because there is some doubt over whether it is being provided meritoriously, because there are some allegations of nepotism and cronyism being practised. The question is, who gets to monitor this land? They do get distributed to the farmers and in particular I raise some issues that we have been inundated with calls in particular from farmers in Nabitu, Sigatoka claiming unfair distribution of agro inputs. Farmers who are prepared to come to see the Minister and I hope they do come and see him, claiming that the Minister is aware where four farmers have received assistance and the fear of them despite ruining their water pumps.

Nabitu has 37 farmers, Honourable Chairman, and only four received assistance following a meeting thereon 20th May, 2019 with the Honourable Minister. In fact, one farmer had a heated argument with the Honourable Minister who allegedly told him to sell his farm to the Chinese. The farmer then replied that he would sell that for \$180,000, if the Honourable Minister found a buyer. Now the question is, Honourable Chairman, if favouritism is involved in the distribution of help as alleged by these farmers from Nabitu, how will agriculture become a thriving sector? Farmers have called the honourable Prime Minister and the Attorney-General and unsuccessfully tried to call the Honourable Agriculture Minister, and the Honourable Minister also for Employment who claims had visited the area before the elections. Now, Honourable Chairman, the issue is because promises were made, and that is another story. Can the Honourable Minister clarify if these issues with regards to the matters that I am raising here today are true? Let me say, Mr. Chairman, that if the Nabitu farmers are not satisfied with the answers that are given, I am sure they are going to come here and try and meet with the Agriculture Minister at some point and hopefully that he will have time to give to them. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, when there is a motion, talk to the motion. Do not wonder around other agricultural things. The motion is on Activity 2, SEG 8. I was wondering what you were going on.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Mr Chair, I thought he will be asking something about whether that amount is sufficient or not, but he is talking about another issue. I do recall there was a meeting and a farmer raised that they need fertilisers subsidy like sugarcane farmers. I said, “We are moving towards developing organic fertiliser. We really do not want to spend millions and millions of dollars to import and getting fertiliser. There are all kinds of environmental impact arising out of using massive amounts of inorganic fertiliser.”

Then he said, “no, we have got a large farm, and without fertiliser we cannot work.” I said that is the mindset we have now. I said, “Just this morning (and it was in the afternoon they had the meeting there), I met a farmer in Kulukulu who is making \$100,000 net out of his cash crop sales. He is not using a single inorganic fertiliser. He is developing his own organic fertiliser with poultry manure as the base. He is not applying any weedicide at all or any pesticide to control pests. Basically he was using other methods to control pests in his farm.” So I said, “look, my Agricultural Officers will take you to meet with this farmer and he will explain to you how this is done”. But he kept on arguing saying, “no, the sugar cane farmers are getting it, we should also get it.” I said, “no, that is not the way we want to take non-sugar agriculture

now. We want to move away from subsidies and grants and treat the farmer as a farmer, and we will support the farmer, we will get the market to the farmer.”

Mr Chairman, it is in that light that this number has slightly decreased, because we have a separate plan to develop organic fertiliser and distribute it to the farmers at a very low cost. The only reason why we will price it is because the moment we have free organic fertiliser given to a farmer, the farmer instead of taking 10 bags, he will take 20 bags and then 30 bags as everything is free. So we will have a back stock price to ensure that the farmer will only take what he or she needs. This is sufficient, we want to take agriculture towards an organic road, and I think at some point in time, we will see the benefits of it.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Yes, Sir, I feel somewhat compelled to make a comment because the Honourable Tikoduadua raised a number of other matters that are completely non-related to this particular allocation, but made various allegations and obviously when the Honourable Minister was making explanations, he obviously was not listening to it.

He wrote to the Honourable PM and I about Nabitu. I do not know if he has ever been to Nabitu and whether he actually went to Nabitu when the farmers and the whole entire area was flooded. We were there, we provided assistance, he should know. He does not know about the various changes that have taken place post the flooding and the assistance that we provided, not just from rations but in terms of seeds, et cetera. He also fails to neglect or mention the fact that Honourable Gavoka always talks about Valley Road that whilst it was a salad bowl of Fiji, every time the produce came down from the hills, in particular the West Bank, it bumped along those pot holes. Today that entire 15 or so kilometres is all tarsealed.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBERS.- Hear, hear!

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- So the shelf life of the produce is much longer now, and as also highlighted in the Budget, there has been an allocation to fix up and indeed tarseal the road on the East bank too because there is a lot of potential in the East bank. We have also made budgetary allocation in respect of the cooler storage facilities but he needs to know that it is not on the other side, they actually cross the river you should know that in Nabitu, and on the other side too.

Mr. Chairman, I have to correct that because he does not know anything about what is happening in Nabitu and the Valley Road. Please, do not bring those kinds of issues here. You get a one farmer incident, some farmer who may have given him a phone call and may have been aggrieved but have been unreasonable taking that entire incident to try and mull over and obfuscate over the current issues that we have in this particular budget - the story of your life.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order!

HON. MEMBER.- Never been there, go there.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- I had already covered that regarding the statement with a hint that you ignore what he said and stick to the motion of Honourable Gavoka, that was my intention. So that is the point, I will take one last speaker on this, Honourable Ro Filipe Tuisawau, you have the floor.

HON. RO F. TUISAWAU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, just speaking in support of the motion regarding the issue we have in front of us. Just looking at SEG 8 in the Ministry of Agriculture, in the Budget, there has been quite a substantial reduction when you look at SEGs 8, 9, 10. So, I am wondering about the impact of that but particularly on the motion, there is a whole lot of programmes there for different products, et cetera. I was wondering what process the Ministry of Agriculture followed in terms of needs analysis which resulted in these programmes, and the second part, what monitoring and evaluation

frameworks you have in place for these projects to monitor in terms of the budget you have - the objectives and the outcomes, and particularly the KPIs you have in place, given the Public Accounts Committee Reports we have, et cetera, to ensure that these funds are spent effectively according to the objectives set out? Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Adi Teimumu Kepa, you have the floor.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Mr. Chairman, I just want to ask a question.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- On the motion.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- This is on Women in Agriculture, just a question. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- That is right. Honourable Members, we will now take a vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	23
Noes	:	27
Not voted	:	1

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, I give the floor to the Honourable Viliame Gavoka to move a motion on Head 30, Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 8. You have the floor.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the allocation for Potato Development Programme (\$100,000) be increased by \$900,000, to take it up to \$1 million.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA- I second the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, just to remind you that there are six other amendments on this Programme. You have the floor.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Honourable Chair, when you talk about Potato Development Programme, I wish to add that we also include sweet potatoes (*kumala*). This, Mr. Chairman, is a crop that is ideally suited to the soil around the Sigatoka River. We all know that we go there for the sand dunes for training because of the sand contents. That soil is also ideal for *kumala*. It used to be in the past, the level of production there was quite huge, but it has dropped over the years. I think, yesterday, when we went for lunch, *kumala* was served and there was one tray that was quickly emptied yesterday, because you all love that *kumala*, the red type. Mr. Chairman, it has been identified to be one of the most ideal food for diabetes. With our NCD issue, I think this is one crop that we really should focus on developing on a critical mass basis. He mentioned a farmer in Kulukulu around that area, that is a very fertile area for vegetables and for *kumala*. Kulukulu, Vunavutu, Nasama, Volivoli, Sigatoka, Yavulo, Laselase, Nayawa, all those areas used to be big with *kumala* production.

Mr. Chairman, I would ask the Honourable Minister for the Department to put in place a programme to revive that crop in the Sigatoka District. It can be harvested (I believe two or three times a year), not only helping the healthy diet in this country but also boosting the economy of the area. I would urge my colleague in the Ministry of Agriculture to set this up. Land is available, it is very close to the main road network. We all know about the road network in Sigatoka, it is highly developed. That crop

can really make a huge difference in the health of this country and the economy of the area. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Mr. Chairman, I think the Honourable Members do not understand that this is not a new allocation, there were allocations last year and the year before. You are adding on, you can continue to increase allocations because you need to look at other areas. You give a leverage to one particular area, one particular crop then again every year you say, "That is a Potato Development Programme." It cannot for ten years be a development programme, can it be? Because you need to graduate out of that. They have in their mind increment to budgeting, meaning every year there should be a top up by \$1 million or \$2 million. That is the kind of mentality they want to have, they want to run Government. I am kind of shocked, no need for that.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	23
Noes	:	26
Not Voted	:	2

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, I give the floor to the Honourable Mitieli Bulanauca to move his motion on Head 30-2-2(8). You have the floor.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I need to stand to look at his smiling face to speak to him. My proposal on the motion, Sir, is to increase the budget of Programme 2-2(8) on two items: Food Security Programme (\$800,000) and Export Promotion Programme (\$700,000), by \$1 million.

HON. RATU T. NAVURELEVU.- I second the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Bulanauca, you have the floor.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- Mr. Chairman, the proposal is to increase the allocations by \$1 million. The total of the two is about \$1.5 million and increase it by \$1 million that would be \$2.5 million, particularly to build up agricultural commercial centres around Fiji. The farmers who are already there now need power and clean water. They need some small hydro or generators around there, et cetera, in order to do all that, and also cooling storage systems there for the farmers to collectively come and sell their goods and process it there, waiting for buyers to come and sell it. It is important to do this so that it helps the resource owners in the rural areas to go from subsistence level of farming to more commercial level of farming. That is the explanation for the motion, Sir. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Members, we will vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	23
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	1

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, I give the floor to Honourable Mitieli Bulanauca to move his motion on Head 30, Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 9. Honourable Bulanauca, no matter where you are, whether you are behind someone, there are several of us here who have a shine....

(Laughter)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- So I have always noticed where you are. You have the floor.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- Thank you, Mr. Chair, Sir. Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 9 - Farm Mechanisation (\$900,000): This proposal is for this allocation to be increased to \$1 million, that is my motion. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

HON. RATU T. NAVURELEVU.- I second the motion, Mr. Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor, Honourable Bulanauca.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- Thank you, Mr. Chair, Sir. This is in particular to the Farm Mechanisation which I support. But you need to add more, particularly to help our resource people out there to go on mechanisation in order to help them from subsistence level of farming to commercial mechanisation farming.

It is important that we assist them with the supply of diggers, we may have to train some operators to help them, training and also at the same time we will need to do some upgrading on the cooperative legal commercial entity to form around those areas, whether at district levels or whatever, it is important to improve farm mechanisation for the rural areas, particularly for the resource owners. I think I have said enough on my motion, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	22
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	2

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, I give the floor to the Honourable Kuridrani to move his motion on Head 30, Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 8. You have the floor.

HON. I. KURIDRANI.- Mr. Chairman, Sir, I move that Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 8 – Women in Agriculture Programme (\$180,000) allocation be increased by \$70,000 to \$250,000.

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- Mr. Chair, I second the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Kuridrani, you have the floor.

HON. I. KURIDRANI.- Mr. Chairman, Sir, women are of vital importance to our agricultural sector, dairy and poultry, small livestock and growing fruit crops. They are responsible for some 60 percent to 80 percent of food production in our country, in farming and rural communities. Women are the main custodian of traditional knowledge and good economists. Mr. Chairman, I understand that women represent more than 50 percent of our population and that is the rationale behind this motion. Thank you, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Mr. Chair, Sir, we all support that. We got targeted programs for that. As I said this is not the only allocation where women will be targeted to assist to get assistance. Their mindset is if that is for women only then that amount will only go to women farmers. Absolutely, No! The entire budget we will look at whether it is a female farmer or a male farmer. Please get out of this mindset that this is the only amount for women farmers.

HON. MEMBER.- Tell them!

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Mr. Chair, can I also speak on that motion. I think it is a very important one where the women are allocated with \$180,000. My question to the Honourable Minister, before I ask my question, please look at things with an open mind. Sometimes I see you are very close minded. So, you have to look at it with an open mind especially when it comes to women.

(Honourable Members interjected)

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- So, please look at this with an open mind. My question to the Honourable Minister is...

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order! Order!

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- ...whether he is also looking at the dairy farmers in Naitasiri. I think they are doing very well there. The dairy farmers in Naitasiri and also the floriculture which Honourable Ratu Naiqama brought up. Floriculture, I know he was talking about horticulture but that is a big area. If you go to the market or you drive pass the market any day of the week you will see the flowers that are there and also in other markets in Fiji, and I think that is an area that you also need to look at, thank you.

HON. MEMBER.- He doesn't do that.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Even the Ministry has actively developed women clusters in dairy farming as alluded to by Honourable Kepa. The women clusters in dalo farming we have actively done that, and there is a team assisting them. This money is actually ring fenced. but there are other money all over the ministry where women farmers are being assisted.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister for Women, you have the floor.

HON. M.R. VUNIWAQA.- Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to contribute to this also because of the role of the Ministry of Women in relation to women in agriculture. There is a lot of work going on that as well, we assist women farmers, women who plant flowers and you would have seen them at the Expo, and also in relation to the program that the Ministry of Agriculture does.

I would like to give a specific example. The lady who raised the most amount of money at the Expo for the past five expos she comes from Yadrana village in Vanua Balavu. It was through the Ministry of Agriculture in recognition of the role that *voivoi* planting does to the lives of women in Yadrana, the Ministry of Agriculture built a resource centre for the women of Yadrana. And out of Yadrana there is a lot of women coming from that village who have been empowered through this particular program. So, it is working. Gender is a crosscutting issue. Every Ministry has a role to play whether it is through Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Women or other ministries it is all to do with an empowerment of women and this is one Government that has done so much for women in this country.

(Chorus of interjection)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order! Honourable Members, will vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	20
Noes	:	27
Not voted	:	4

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Kuridrani, you have the floor to move you motion, Head 30, Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 8.

HON. I. KURIDRANI.- Mr. Chairman, I move a motion on Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 8, regarding the Yaqona Farming Programme, I propose that the allocation for Yaqona Farming Development to be increased from \$700,000 to \$1 million.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Is there a seconder?

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- Mr. Chair, I second the motion.

HON. I. KURIDRANI.- Mr. Chairman Sir, we all know the importance of yaqona in the economy of our country, and it is a crop that will help in the eradication of our social problems that is currently affecting our nation. Mr. Chairman, Sir, the reason why I feel that the allocation need to be increased because majority of these farmers that are currently planting yaqona live in rural areas, in isolated areas. These farmers are not accessible to financial assistance basically by Fiji Development Bank and other financial institutions.

The reason Mr. Chairman, Sir, that these farmers need farm access road, they need clearing costs, they need farming materials and Mr. Chairman, Sir, the allocation is not enough to cover all the farmers around Fiji. Yaqona is planted around Fiji, and that is the reason Mr. Chairman, Sir, I feel that the allocation needs to be increased to \$1 million.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- I wish to speak to support this motion, I also have a similar one and that can be withdrawn. Perhaps Mr. Chairman, if I could start with the failure of this Honourable Minister to fix the problems that were there by his predecessor, and was also there by his predecessor in relation to yaqona. You can extend it even to dalo and other areas that cover our rural areas or villages.

The Honourable Chairman was talking about a coconut, just like all the coconuts are there but understand Honourable Minister about half of this side and half of that side we live on coconut. Coconut paid for our fees, coconut paid for our boarding fees and if you care, he said, “more has turned upside down or something with coconut produce”, but it is the production turnaround or whatever, it is the production, it is the consequence or the result. If he care to take a ride from Savusavu to Natuvu and Taveuni, you will see the trees there are 50 years to 60 years old, so where are all the coconuts in Bua or even Bagata? There are some replanting there, but it is through Japanese Aid;

(Honourable Member interjected)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order, order!

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Sokoyama is supplying the coconuts for replanting, so these ones here, may be they are putting it in the sea or somewhere. It is not growing!

(Inaudible interjections)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- That is how we look at the consequences on the ground, what is moving, there is no tree there. That is what I am saying, I live there and I go there every day, and they are 60 years old.

Back to yaqona, let me make a comparison first. If you make a comparison with commitment that they give to the sugar industry. I think there is about \$37 million, I stand to be corrected, for sugar access road every year.

(Honourable Member interjected)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- The sugar cane farmers, have a road that goes direct to their house, and water is provided, electricity is there.

(Honourable Member interjected)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Now compare that to the yaqona farmers or the dalo or the cocoa or the one in villages. If you go to Kadavu, go to Nabukelevuira, is there a road access road there, no! Talaulia, nothing; Dagai, nothing.

(Honourable Member interjected).

HON. N. NAIWAKULA.- Go to Vanua Levu. I hope the Honourable Minister for Infrastructure is listening because that road from Nasasa to Lakeba, where is it, it should have started this year. It would have helped all the villages to connect from there to Valavoni to Nacula, to Lakeba; villages who are producing millions and millions in yaqona and contributing to our GDP, maybe much more than others.

I hope the Honourable Minister for Infrastructure will take note of the road from Navonu to Natewa, that is a public road. Nicotine, you know is there, and there are upto 50 or 100 young people producing (I can tell you) millions and millions. Some of these *yaqona* farmers when they go to the bank, the bank is even surprised. Where did you get your money from? So they do not want to bank it, they just carry it around because even the bank cannot believe how much money they have in their pocket. But what assistance have you done? Honourable Minister for Infrastructure, that is a public road from Navonu to Natewa. In the last *tikina* meeting, the Government was saying they will not maintain it. Why? There are so many yaqona farmers, and they need assistance.

HON. MEMBER.- What are you talking about?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Yaqona!

(Laughter)

HON. N. NAIWAKULA.- And how you are lacking in your help, how you are putting all your assistance elsewhere. It is a public road.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBERS.- Farm road.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order!

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Let me remind the other side again, the road from Navonu to Natewa, not the one that goes through Drekeniwai, that goes up to the former sawmill, that is a public road. Can

you just google or text to your Ministry to tell them to confirm it to you that is a public road. Ask them to confirm it to you also that in the last *tikina* meeting, the Government said they would not maintain it. Why? There are millions and millions of dollars coming from there.

(Honourable Member interjects)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- No, I have got 20 minutes. But this is the problem that the Honourable Minister, too many promises. Your predecessor too, too many promises. Where is the agricultural revolution that you promised? We are still waiting. We look at your contribution to the GDP, we can talk, talk, talk. We can talk here of your dreams, of what you want to do, of your plans but that is not how we assess it from this side.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Mr. Chairman, I think he has said it enough.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order! Order!

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- I have 20 minutes.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- No, you do not have 20 minutes.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- I am on yaqona, they are doing it differently, they are trying to skin the cat in so many ways. They cannot find a solution. Previously, during the dalo boom, you go to all the villages, they are getting ready, every day. They are getting ready even when you go up to Vaturova. But now you go back there, only grass. Grass in Vaturova, grass in Buca Bay.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. N. NAIWAKULA.- Batiki bluegrass; there is only grass there but there is an agro-station for marketing in Savusavu. For what? Because first you have to assist these farmers produce. I think they are doing it the wrong way. They are treating villages like they are individual commercial company. They could blend into their lifestyle. No, there is more because this is your failure.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order!

HON. N. NAIWAKULA.- And we are asking here to increase this, and the honourable Minister's attitude is that we have a different kind of thinking from this side. No, it may be a contribution this year, last year, the year before, but we are looking at production, we are looking at outcome. Because we do not see any outcome, no increase, that is why we are moving this motion, that is the reason. It is not because that is already in the allocation there, it is because we do not look at result. We see, wasting your time; wasting your trucks.

(Hon. Dr. M. Reddy interjected)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order, order!

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- How do you farm the land? Do you want to come this side and we come that side to teach you how? That is the problem. So I will end there. I hope he will make a difference. We trust you and if you fail, we will sack you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Honourable Chairman, for Farm Access Roads and for Land Clearing, there is a separate allocation there. Farm Access Roads - \$800,000 and Land Clearing - \$900,000, that will be done.

We are looking at 1,500 hectares of new land under new coconut trees in this financial year. With the Coconut Development Board, we are giving \$20 to the farmers to plant one new coconut tree. Where in the world you give a farmer coconut seedling, plus \$20 to go and plant it? Now, still they do not want to plant, what do you do? I am sure you have heard this. You can take the horse to the well, push the head into the well, and the horse has to drink.

(Honourable Members interjected)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order, order!

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Honourable Chairman, all these things are there to incentivise the farmer. Thank you.

(Honourable Members interjected)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order, order!

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Mr. Chairman, Sir, Honourable Kuridrani earlier on gave us some wrong figures. He said that there are more females in Fiji than males.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBER.- Very poor.

(Hon. I. Kuridrani interjected)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Someone said that.

(Honourable Member interjected)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- No, no, he meandered from coconut trees to *yaqona*, but let me correct that.

Mr. Chairman, 50.7 percent of the population are males, 49.3 percent of the population are females. Similar type of misrepresentations made from the other side is what Honourable Nawaikula is doing. He has obfuscated and blurred the differentiation between public roads and farm roads.

Generally speaking, public roads is where the road is actually under the name of the State. That is where Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) goes, where the road is actually owned by the State. The land possessory rights has been transferred to the State.

Secondly, the Honourable Minister also highlighted the fact that you have Farm Access Road allocation which is separate.

Thirdly, there is no doubt huge windfall in the *yaqona* industry. One kilogramme is now about \$160 to \$180. When one farm harvests his *yaqona* plantation, depending on the acreage they have and I once went with the Honourable Prime Minister to Vanua Levu where a farmer at that point in time, in one harvest made close to \$2 million. There is no way a cane farmer can make that kind of money in one harvest. They barely eke out a living of \$8,000 a year, \$10,000 a year. To compare that to someone who

is making in one harvest a couple of million dollars is again, not comparing what they said - apples with apples.

(Honourable Members interjected)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order, order!

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Fourthly, he said, even if you multiply \$8,000 by five years is \$40,000. In five years, you get \$2 million, still not comparable. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thought Honourable Professor Prasad will come into this and Honourable Tikoduadua, they will not come into it because it has been said by the Opposition.

Fourthly, he said that all cane farmers have water and electricity. What a lot of nonsense! He says that all of them have roads going up to their homes. No!

Mr. Chairman, Sir, a lot of cane farmers in Fiji till today and I have relatives who are cane farmers also, they have been drinking from wells for decades. No electricity! Some of them, of course, are now getting water and electricity, like other people in Fiji are getting water and electricity. So, please, do not try and have a dichotomous approach in trying to split the deride along sugar as if we are doing everything only for sugar, and nothing for anyone else or any other type of farm. That is what they have been doing.

They have been doing that for the past two days, completely incorrect. Please, do not do that. Let us have a debate based on facts and not trying to obfuscate issues, and you know what the subtext to all of this is.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Ratu Lalabalavu, you have the floor.

HON. RATU N.T. LALABALAVU.- Honourable Chairman. I would like to speak in support of the motion, especially when it is do with Yaqona Planting Programme. I also understand, Mr. Chairman, Sir, that there is allocation for Export Promotion Programme in SEG 8 and the Extension Services as well. The issue that I would like to raise is, now that we have electricity in Taveuni and thanks to the Government of the day, also in Tunuloa, thank you to the Government of the day. What kind of support services do we have in this Yaqona Programme where we would like to now venture into value adding, because we have power now?

With these two Programmes and the three items in this particular SEG, there is no mention as to what really are the plans that the Government has to go into value adding since they provide the power, they provide the road and the farmers are doing well and the price is just right. That is the question that I would like to raise on this particular motion. Thank you, Honourable Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister for Defence, you have the floor.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. I will just contribute very quickly. Let me highlight a few things, definitely for the commodities to grow, we need to have infrastructure. But can we remind the Honourable Nawaikula that we cannot do the infrastructure all at once. We have to prioritise and, of course, with the limited resources that we have, but we will continue to improve the infrastructure because accessibility, particularly to the market is important for the growth of industries, particularly the primary industries.

Let me remind the Honourable Member, in Vanua Levu, I have said this so many times, we started from Nayarabale to Vanuavou, that was the first road to improve because there are so many farmers in that

area. Then we did Namuavoivoi-and Daria, the Honourable Bulanauca's village is along that road. Then we did Tilaka-Nakorovou, that is from Bua to the interior of Macuata.

We have just completed Seavaci to link up to the Nayarabale Road and, of course, Korotasere as well to link up again to the Nayarabale-Vanuavou Road. I was in Wailevu, Tunuloa, after the April Sitting and this question was raised to me, Navonu-Nakelo Road. I checked with the Commissioner Northern and the DPO Northern and the assurance that I was given by them that will be the priority for this year, the next financial year. So that road is the next one and after that will be Kedrasese.

There has been a plan about all infrastructure in Vanua Levu. The *yaqona* boom, Honourable Chairman, Sir, let me explain very quickly is because of the domestic demand after *TC Winston*. But there is huge opportunities for the export markets, however, because of quarantine regulations and protocols, we now, with the European Union and our Embassy in Brussels, are working on two things - the Kava Manual and the Kava Standards. Once these two are completed and we are almost in that completion process now, Honourable Chairman, Sir, that will enable us to go into new market segments. I am glad that the Honourable Ratu Lalabalavu raised this question, "What is next?" because that exactly is the next move in the Agriculture Sector. Let us come out of commodities.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition and the Honourable Kuridrani would know that during the Honourable Leader of the Opposition's time, they introduced what they called the Commodity Development Framework. It is a good programme, but it still has its failures because it concentrated on the production of commodities.

The Ministry of Agriculture has done all the analysis now and you will see the Programmes. We developed the commodities and we developed the value chain, from production to the market. The focus now if you look at all the Ministry of Agriculture's Programmes that are in place now, it is from, first, improve on commodities and from commodities we shift to products. On cassava, cassava is a commodity but we can do cassava starch, cassava flour, we can do so many other products, cassava noodles.

Yaqona, we have three now already in the market. One is the Taki Mai drink, the other one is the capsule and the other product that we have is the concentrated kava lacto powder. There are already three in the market now. But for us to go into pharmaceutical, particularly in the European market, this is why we need Kava Standards and the Kava Manual because food standards are very, very particular now. It is all in the process.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, and as I have stated, that road that the Honourable Member has alluded to, I do not know when was this Tikina meeting, but the most reliable information would be from the Commissioner Northern and the DPO because they are the development agencies officers responsible for the Northern Division.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Last speaker on this motion, Honourable Professor Biman Prasad.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I support the motion and indeed, I have always supported the focus on non-sugar crop sectors. But let me just say, Mr. Chairman, that I am actually quite surprised and sometimes embarrassed in the manner in which Honourable Members on the Government side keep accusing the Honourable Members on the Opposition side of pursuing a raced-based agenda. In fact, they keep saying this.

Mr. Chairman, if Honourable Members from this side talk about *yaqona* or kava or about *iTaukei* farmers, that is not necessarily racist. I mean you have a Ministry of *iTaukei* Affairs; sometimes their comparison with non-sugar crop sectors with sugar may not be appropriate, I agree. I urge Honourable

Members on the other side, stop accusing Honourable Members on the Opposition side if they are talking about non-sugar crops or if they are talking about why it should be done this way.

Since I have been in Parliament, Mr. Chairman, Honourable Members of the SODELPA Party have never opposed a single motion that I have moved in this Parliament for sugarcane farmers. In fact, they have spoken in favour of that. So, let us not get into this racial diatribe every time someone talks about a particular issue.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- They are misrepresenting facts.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order!

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- That is another matter. If they are misrepresenting facts you have the right to correct it, I have no issues with that. But, Mr. Chairman, I keep hearing this, “Oh! Biman Prasad is not saying anything.”

(Chorus of interjections)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order!

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Mr. Chairman, Honourable Members on this side are not racist people, that is the point I want to make.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Why do you keep labelling them as racists?

(Chorus of interjections)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order, order!

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- That is what I want to say. I said in my speech the other day, Mr. Chairman, they ran one of the most racist campaigns themselves. Let us be honest! Let us be honest about what we say! Let us stick to the issues.

I urge all Honourable Members, Mr. Chairman, in this Parliament to stick to issues. Let us not keep talking about, “You are supporting this, you are supporting this.” Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will vote on this amendment.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	23
Noes	:	27
Not voted	:	1

Motion is defeated.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Wash yourselves with Boom.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will take the next motion. Honourable Bulitavu, Head 30, Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 8. You have the floor, Sir.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you Mr. Chairman, Sir. I move that Head 30, Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 8, Farm Access Roads be increased by \$500,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Is there a seconder?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- I second the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Bulitavu, you have the floor.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you Mr. Chairman, Sir. As we have already heard from the Honourable Minister in the previous debate by Honourable Nawaikula and all who participated in that very heated debate that there is a real need for Farm Access Roads in the agriculture sector. The Honourable Minister for Defence had talked about the various roads in Vanua Levu, the Kedrasese Road, the Vaturova Road, the Nayarabale/Vanuavou Road and also the other roads that are coming that are in the pipeline. But most of these roads are logging roads, they started with logging then after that it is useful for agriculture.

The reason for this is the maintenance of these roads. Most of these roads during heavy rain are washed away, the bridges are also washed away; poor drainage system washes away half of these roads and the roads cannot be used for agriculture access. Most of the agriculture stations too are situated along these roads, and Government officials travelling to their various quarters, given the condition of these roads also face difficulties.

The other issue has been in terms of the tender of these roads, and the time that is taken to approve the tender to the contractors. Also some of the contractors receive less funding in terms of the tenders for these roads. Some of them want to save their names and take money from their pockets just to complete the project. These are some of the issues that surround not only Farm Access Roads in terms of getting access to the market, but also maintaining roads, contractors and also raising the agriculture station, as you have alluded to this morning to Tier 1 standard, with everything that used to be there, the nursery, the seedlings.

Most of these Agriculture Stations do not have the basic crop that needs to be there and the various fertilisers, assistance and advice. Most of these stations that are in the rural areas, the farmers really need to go to the office in Labasa, if you are talking about the North or come right to Nausori if you are in Naitasiri. But that is one of the reasons why we should increase this. It was \$1.2 million in the last Budget, now it has been reduced to \$800,000. But if you really need to move into your agriculture revolution, and to increase production and the chain from crop to the market, I think we should pour more money into Farm Access Roads. *Vinaka vakalevu.*

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Mr. Chairman, I have said that every year this allocation is there, and he is asking that we continue to increase. Let us say, we have an allocation this year, there are certain number of roads done this year. You do not have to do the roads every year. So the next year, this allocation is for the next set of roads. They do not understand that. They think that every year we will be doing the same number of roads. This allocation is more than enough. We have Ministry of Waterways also assisting with drainage work, we have Ministry of Infrastructure also assisting, we have Rural and Maritime Development also having an allocation. I think we are okay with this allocation.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes : 21
Noes : 26
Not Voted : 4

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, I give the floor to the Honourable Niko Nawaikula to move his motion on Head 30, Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 8. You have the floor, Sir.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is in relation to *dalo*, I withdraw *yaqona*; the same problem. I move a motion that the amount be moved up by \$2.5 million in relation to that SEG.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Is there a seconder?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- I second the motion, Mr. Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Nawaikula, you have the floor.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- In relation to *dalo* I think if the Honourable Minister cares to look at *dalo* production, it has been going down. He has the figures, he has the responsibility to look at the figures but we are accessing it from what we see. Now production is only limited to Taveuni, before the whole of Natewa Peninsula were also producing *dalo* even up to Vaturova, that is in Vanua Levu and all species of *dalo* were being exported but now he will confirm that the production is going down. To repeat to the Honourable Minister, that is how we look at it and that is why we are moving this motion. You may have allocations year after year after year and if production is not going up it tells us that you are not doing your job. Sorry, but do not get personal, but this is how we look at it. We are looking at it objectively, we are looking at it for the whole population and we look at the Budget figures. So, those are what the Budget figures are telling us that production is decreasing which means he is not doing his job. Sorry to say that, please do not get personal. Every time we raise something here, that is how they are answering the question on that side as if there is something bad.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order!

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- We are not pointing the finger at you, we just looking at the figures and we are reading it out and that is what the figures are telling us. Please increase it.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- The volume of *dalo* production has gone down over the last five years, that is true. There are two reasons for that :

1. After *TC Winston*, a lot of farms were damaged; and
2. After *TC Winston* when the *yaqona* prices went up, obviously there is a shift of land under *dalo* towards *yaqona* cultivation; that is Basic Economics 101.

(Honourable Member interjects)

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- *Wawa*, let me explain. Now, what we are doing is, we develop in clusters, groups of farmers we are assisting them and by the end of next year, we are looking at doubling *dalo* output. Record it now, January 2021, you ask me. Thank you.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- What percentage of GDP?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- *Dalo* production I am saying will be doubled by January 2021.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	20
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	4

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, I give the floor to the Honourable Bulanauca to move his motion on Head 30, Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 10.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. My motion is to increase allocation for Copra Stabilisation and also in SEG 9 on Coconut Farming Programme by \$500,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Is there a seconder?

HON. RATU T. NAVURELEVU.- I second the motion, Mr. Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Bulanauca, you have the floor.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is important that we increase development of the coconut industry, particularly for resource owners in rural areas in Lau, Vanua Levu, Lomaiviti, Kadavu where they grow coconuts. This is to have some subsidy to increase the production of coconuts. To concentrate on Fiji Dwarf, which have a better production rather than the hybrid that we have at the moment. It is important that we increase the development, production as well as the outcome.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Mr. Chair, we have indeed worked out the overall grant allocated for the coconut industry to our Research Station in Taveuni, on the stabilisation fund and also to the Copra Development Board that is sufficient to look at the target that we are aiming for next year in terms of new acreage under coconut, in terms of incentivising the farmers to respond to the price that we have got, one of the best prices that we have now. In fact, we met Copra Millers Limited last year along with Food Processors and one of the things that we discussed was to relook at copra pricing and the use of stabilisation funds. So, that is an ongoing exercise now.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	23
Noes	:	27
Not voted	:	1

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Activity 3?

(Chorus of "Noes")

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Programme 3 (Livestock), Activity 1. Honourable Tikoduadua, you have the floor.

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a quick question to the Honourable Minister with regards to SEG 7, on Disease Compensation. A clarification in terms of whether this covers for the TB and Brucellosis disease compensation?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Yes, Mr. Chair. We now have a revised price. It was approved by Parliament last year on the compensation for cattle affected by Brucellosis and TB. We worked with the Fiji Meat Industry Board to compensate the farmers whose animals are culled out and taken to the abattoir.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Leawere, you have the floor.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just on SEG 7 in terms of Animal Pounds, is this Fiji wide, according to that allocation?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Fiji wide. We got a new animal pound established just about a month ago in Naikavaki, Bua. When we get the stray animals, we impound them there. This amount is to look after the pound keeper. The pound keepers' expenses are also generated from the fees that the animal owners are charged.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Activity 2.

(Chorus of `Noes`)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Activity 3?

(Chorus of `Ayes` and `Noes`)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor, Honourable Member.

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- Honourable Chair, I might wait because I think I have a motion already on your desk, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have a motion on Programme 3, Activity 2, we are on Activity 2. It is in your writing.

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- Yes, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor.

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- Yes, Sir. Honourable Chairman, my first motion relates to Programme 3, Activity 2, SEG 6, primarily relating to Dairy Industry Support (\$1,000,000), my motion is to raise that amount to \$2 million. That is my motion, Sir.

HON. L.S. QEREQERETABUA.- I second the motion, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Tikoduadua, you have the floor.

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- Thank you, Honourable Chair. The dairy industry, in my view, has not really recovered from the reforms done with the dairy industry and relating earlier to the words of Honourable Nawaikula, we are looking at what is on the ground in terms of our farmers, and I am speaking here primarily with what I see with farmers up in Tailevu North, in particular, on the flat lands beyond Korovou where much of our milk was produced in the past.

I have raised similar issues in the past with regards to the queries and the concerns of the farmers and the problems they are going through. Later on, talking about the other motions that I have in terms of brucellosis and tuberculosis but, Honourable Chair, our dairy farmers need support right now. I do not think \$1 million is sufficient. I know there is a lot of work done to try and help them, but I am sure, given the time that has taken from the reform until now, more resources could be put into it to revive the dairy industry to where it was, and that is all I would like to say right now, Honourable Chair. Thank you.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Mr. Chair, I would be happy to talk to the Honourable Member later on and explain to him what we are doing to expand the dairy industry. We are expanding the dairy industry this week, big time in the Western Division, Ba is very promising. There is good amount of milk being collected, there is chiller installed, Tavua as well.

We are looking at going down further to Nadi, Lautoka and Sigatoka. By the end of next year, we should have Sigatoka covered as well in terms of vegetables and chillers. The moment we have chillers, that will attract farmers to have a small or hold a dairy farm.

But, Mr. Chair, the bigger thing that we are looking at is to establish intensive dairy farms. This is where the dairy cattle will be inside the shed. We are looking at 250 to start with and then going up to 500, whereas we grow, feed and pasture outside – carton-carry pasture, as well as corn feed for the animals.

That is the plan at the moment. Looking at Yaqara as a possible place to establish this Intensive Dairy Unit as well as Tailevu and the Honourable Prime Minister has got us to work with a very successful entrepreneur from Israel to assist us, he has successfully done this in Israel as well as in Papua New Guinea. We are looking at that, so that is the bigger plan but we are also looking at spreading dairy farmers. Interestingly, the yield of dairy, when you compare it is higher in the Western Division than in the Central Division. This is something that we are now examining. So huge potential out of dairy farming as well vis-à-vis other non-sugar crops, so we will look at that.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	23
Noes	:	27
Not voted	:	1

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- I give the floor to the Honourable Tikoduadua for his motion. Head 30 – Programme 3, Activity 2, SEG 8.

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- Thank you, Honourable Chair. This particular motion is with regards to the Establishment of Brucellosis Free Farms (\$1,000,000), I commend the Government for this particular initiative. However, as I alluded to earlier, I think more resources should be poured into it given the time that has lapsed since these attacks by this particular disease, which is really very traumatic on the farmers, particularly small-sized dairy farms who have only less than 20 cattle.

It is really a very traumatising thing to find out that half of the cattle have suffered from brucellosis or tuberculosis. So I would like to move, Honourable Chair, to raise the allocation under this particular Activity by an additional million dollars. Listening to the Honourable Minister, whilst he spoke on the last motion that I had raised before the House in the Committee today, he missed out on a very critical element of dairy farming.

In terms of the farmers, with regards to the collapse of the dairy industry right now, particularly in the areas of Tailevu, is the uncertainty that the farmers are going through right now because there does not seem to be a net covering them or whether there is a particular plan that is being known to them about going forward, whether they actually do have a future in the dairy industry in that area.

I can understand they are moving to the West and good reasons for that, but what about the traditional dairy farmers within the Central Division, who have relied on dairy as their source of living and also contributing to the local economy? I would like to ask the Honourable Minister and the Ministry to also have a look at it in terms of the plight of the farmers, and I again move before the House if the Government could consider to increase this allocation, with regards to the Establishment of Brucellosis Free Farms from the current allocation of a million dollars. It is currently under "R", to \$2 million. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Yes, Mr. Chair, this allocation is basically to secure the farm, the parameter because once we declare a farm as brucellosis-free, then we need to secure it so that we do not have any infiltration, outside animals coming in, and again polluting the farm or infecting the animal that we have there.

Last year, the utilisation rate was 61 percent, that is why we did not see that there is a need to increase this amount. The Honourable Member mentioned about the support to the existing traditional dairy area, of course, for the last five decades, this area has got massive amount of money or support.

We also have a well-established dairy co-operatives scheme here, which the Western Division does not have. We want to keep the Western Division dairy industry very clean. We do not want to develop additional layers of overheads, so they also get calf-rearing support, additional calf-rearing milk. They also get feed support. We are now establishing pasture for these farmers in the Central Division.

We have a new scheme where we will go and plant an acre of new *cut-and-carry juncao* pasture on their farms, from there they can expand it. These kinds of supports are there and I will be meeting them later in the year and having meetings with the dairy farmers. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	23
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	1

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, I give the floor to the Honourable Kuridrani to move your motion, Head 30, Programme 3, Activity 2, SEG 8. You have the floor.

HON. I. KURIDRANI.- Mr. Chairman, I move that Programme 3, Activity 2, SEG 8, Beef Extension Programme (\$200,000) to be increased by \$800,000 to \$1 million.

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- I second the motion, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Kuridrani, you have the floor.

HON. I. KURIDRANI.- Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have mentioned this in my response to our Budget on Monday, that the Ministry of Agriculture needs to put more focus and resources in the beef industry.

Specifically, the reason, Mr. Chairman, Sir, that this industry determines the viability of our Fiji Meat Industry Board Abattoirs, and if the trend continues, we are likely to use Government finance again to continue to help the abattoirs to sustain production for the next 10 years.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, we have the resources here, we have the land and we have old beef schemes that are currently defunct at the moment, and that is like the Yalavou Beef Scheme, Uluisaivou Beef Scheme and Verata Beef Scheme. These are all schemes, Mr. Chairman, Sir, that currently have the infrastructure developed with fences still standing. All they need is for the Ministry of Agriculture to put more focus on the development of this beef scheme, so that we can improve our beef supply. That is the main reason, Mr. Chairman, Sir, I move to increase the allocation for the Beef Development Programme to \$1 million.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Mr. Chairman, very quickly, I agree with him that this is an important industry, yes, but unfortunately he is not aware of the latest developments.

We will be doing an opening of the Yalavou Beef Scheme very soon. At the moment, we are undertaking the fencing and clearing of that and developing of the pasture. That will be dedicated only to move the *Senepol* high-yielding breed of beef cattle that we have, we will announce that.

We have two new breed of cattle, for dairy and beef. That is through the Embryo Transfer Programme that will be ready very soon, and we will move that, and that place will be basically breeding for *Senepol*. From there we will be giving out to farmers this high-yielding beef breed of cattle. We are quite excited about that. We have also now really fast-track a development contribution to Tilivalevu Beef Scheme that we had which was quite down.

We will be making some announcement on that too. I can tell you that by the end of next year, we will have significant progress in terms of development of the beef cattle sector, but once I have a better hand of the projection, I could give some actual data like I gave for dalo, but not now. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will vote on this.

(Chorus of 'Ayes' and 'Noes')

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	22
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	2

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, I give the floor to the Honourable Niko Nawaikula, to move his motion on Head 30, Programme 3, Activity 2, SEG 8. You have the floor, Sir.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- I move the motion that Head 30 be increased by \$1 million, in relation to Programme 3, Activity 2, SEG 8 – Apiculture Industry Development (\$200,000).

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Is there a seconder?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Honourable Chairman, I second the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Nawaikula, you have the floor.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Mr. Chairman, this is in relation to the beekeeping. Beekeeping has been around this industry for some time, but it does not seem to be taking off as it should. Perhaps, if I start by saying that this is suitable to rural villages, and I hope the other side will not charge me for being racist in doing this. But it is wrong to say to the villagers if they are not producing, if their land is left idle, to say that they are lazy. They are not lazy! It is just because they look at things differently. If you live in the village, they don't look at cash the way we look at cash; they don't look at land in terms of the money. They have a sustainable lifestyle where you only get as much as you can, and leave the rest. More often than not, we blame them for being lazy, they are not lazy. The problem I think is the failure for the Ministry, for moving that away, you have to sync your programme with the way they live and this is where it applies, in my view, especially on beekeeping.

In my village, I declare my interest, I am using this as an example. In my village, this has been going on, what we have done is to sync it with their way of life. They have the *vanua* and the *mataqali* and the target is to increase it. I hope by increasing this, and hopefully with the Ministry's assistance, a lot of assistance, it will help villages with the way they live. They don't need to work, the bees will do all the work for you. They can do other things, and it is important to revitalise this industry and that is the reason for this motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Mr. Chairman, I think he is talking 10 years behind. The industry has been revitalised. If you compare the honey production figures over the last 10 years, you will note that there is a steady increase in honey production. What we are planning to do this year, there are three keys that we need to do to give them powers to get them into bee farming:

1. Bee Hive: We are looking at distributing about 200 bee hives, and 4,000 frames and 4,000 wax foundation; and
2. Honey Harvesting Equipment.

In addition to that, we are looking at organising 10 training programmes. This allocation is to further extend the number of bee farmers in the upcoming financial year. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Members, we will vote on this motion.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	21
Noes	:	25
Not Voted	:	5

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, Activity 3. I give the floor to Honourable Gavoka on Head 30, Programme 3, Activity 3, SEG (8). You have the floor.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Honourable Chairman, this is regarding Beef Breeding Programme. I wish to increase the budget by \$1.150 million to bring it up to \$15,00,000 in terms of Beef Breeding Programme. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Is there a seconder?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- I second the motion.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Much has been said by the Honourable Kuridrani our concern about beef. We serve in the Economic Affairs Committee and the Fiji Meat Industry Board (FMIB) is very slow in producing the Annual Reports, Mr. Chairman, to enable us to fully understand the scale in which the industry has fallen over the years. What I would like to highlight today, Mr. Chairman, was identified in one of our Committee Reports. If Fiji could look into speciality beef. We know that Vanuatu is a very big producer of beef of the high quality that is exported to markets like Japan. The Japanese are very discerning by us, they only buy the best.

We believe that certain parts of Fiji have the same geographical areas, the same terrain as in Vanuatu. Perhaps this is where we could focus going forward, hence my suggestion that we increase the funding in this Programme to enable us to explore the development of speciality beef. Not only for our local consumption, as you know, Mr. Chairman, a lot of the beef in the hotels are still being imported. We talk about leakages in tourism, this is one way of addressing that leakage, and that is what I would like the Ministry to consider in terms of reviving the Beef Industry and adding some speciality into it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Mr. Chairman, I think I also mentioned in one of my statements earlier in the Parliament sitting that we are giving priority to this. We are very particular about this, and we fully understand the importance of the beef industry and the beef meat in the tourism sector as well. It is a high valued meat. But it is wrong to compare our beef with the Vanuatu beef. Because the beef that we get in the market it is also that cattle used in dragging bullocks for so many years, whipped so many times and then at the end when it was not able to be used, it is slaughtered and sent to the market and mixed up. You talk to Honourable Usamate he would tell you about it. So, that is why the quality of meat there is not good because it is mixed up. Vanuatu is totally the beef cattle for that particular purpose, and that is why it ends up in the market.

(Hon. V.R. Gavoka inaudibly interjects)

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Breeding Programme, I just outlined that we have this new beef cattle breed, but the market is mixed up with the beef meat. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	21
Noes	:	27
Not voted	:	3

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, Programme 6 – Land Resource Planning, Activity 1

(Chorus of Noes)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- The Parliament will now vote on Head 30, that the amount of Head 30 - Ministry of Agriculture be approved.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of `Ayes` and `Noes`.)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	27
Noes	:	23
Not voted	:	1

Head 30 agreed to.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will suspend proceedings for lunch and lunch will be provided in the Big Committee Room. Parliament will resume in an hour, but I have to remind Honourable Members that there is a medical team available for you, that is for cholesterol and other things including those who want the makeover. We adjourn for lunch

The Parliament adjourned at 1.20 p.m.

The Parliament resumed at 2.32 p.m.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, this session is called to order.

Head 31 – Ministry of Fisheries

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, the floor is open for Head 31, Programme 1, Activity 1. You have the floor Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG (7), in terms of National Employment Centre (NEC). There is a new expenditure, can we have some clarification from the Honourable Minister, please? Probably go to the volunteers, how much are they are being paid from that allocation? Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Thank you Mr. Chairman, Sir. These are for graduates from both USP and FNU who are attached to our various programmes around Fiji, mainly, in research and development. The normal NEC that has been given out is \$110 and \$100.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Programme 1, Activity 2?

(Chorus of ‘Ayes’ and ‘Noes’)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Programme 2, Activity 1, Honourable Lynda Tabuya.

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- Thank you Mr. Chairman. Just clarification from the Honourable Minister on Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG (2), the removal of the allocation for casual workers. I am seeking clarification in terms of the engagement of these casual workers, what rates they were paid and the work they were engaged in the past year? Thank you.

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Mr. Chairman, Sir, these casuals have been formalised into the normal sector and they have been given contracts. The realignment of our internal restructure, the positions that used to be on contract as casuals have now been formalised. I do not have the exact figure on the number of people who had been transferred to that.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Programme 2-3, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Programme 2-1. Honourable Tabuya.

HON. L.D. TABUYA.-Mr. Chairman, one question to the Honourable Minister in terms of the Fish Wardens. Where in this allocation in terms of General Administration are your Fish Wardens and how are they compensated for their work? Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister.

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Mr. Chairman, it is not in this Activity, but is in the other Activity for Offshore and Inshore Fisheries.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Leawere, you have the floor.

HON. M.R. LEAWARE.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sir, SEG 4 – Vehicles: Spare Parts and Maintenance (\$12,800); Vehicles: Spare Parts and Maintenance (\$12,800); I need some clarification from the Honourable Minister, because if I am correct, Government vehicles are on lease so that means the companies that lease out the vehicles are responsible for the maintenance. Can we have some clarifications from the Honourable Minister, Sir?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- In this SEG 4, there are some vehicles that were bought before the new system was introduced.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Rasova, you have the floor.

HON. S.R. RASOVA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Honourable Minister, in the 2018-2019 Estimates, there was a Fisheries Stakeholders Consultation of \$20,000. Where is this funding? There is no funding allocation for that in the 2019-2020 Estimates. In regards to fisheries, we have to consult the stakeholders and all the people. Can you please clarify why you are not funding that this year?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Mr. Chairman, Sir, that consultation has been completed, the report has now been formulated and to be released.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Kuridrani, you have the floor.

HON. I. KURIDRANI.- Mr. Chairman, my question has been asked by Honourable Rasova, thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Gavoka, you have the floor.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. SEG 7 – Feasibility Study, I know it is in compliance and enforcement, but the Honourable Minister made an undertaking that they would carry out a survey on the stock of *bech-de-mer* in the country. Has that been completed or where are we on that, or is it covered in another SEG?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Mr. Chairman, Sir, I cannot find any of that in Activity 1(7)

HON.V.R. GAVOKA.- SEG 7 is Feasibility Study, Honourable Minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG (7).

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Can you ask the question again, Honourable Member, please?

HON.V.R. GAVOKA.- In SEG 7, there is an allocation of \$200,000 under Feasibility Study which I see is compliance and enforcement. The undertaking was made that your Ministry will carry out a survey, a stocktake of the *bech-de-mer* stock in the country. Where are we on that and what are the results?

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Mr. Chairman, that is not included in this feasibility study, this is basically on compliance and enforcement of fisheries activities. The question that he is asking now will be contained in the Inshore and Offshore Fisheries.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- So that is covered under another SEG?

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Yes.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- All right.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Activity 2. Honourable Rasova, you have the floor.

HON. S.R. RASOVA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to ask the Honourable Minister on the Aid-in-Kind. You seem to have about \$662,795 every year. Can you please clarify as to who benefits from this Aid-in-Kind?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is for inshore fisheries compliance and that is a support provided by the New Zealand Government under the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. They are actually carrying out a study with our Ministry on the regulatory and activities within inshore and offshore.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Qereqeretabua, you have the floor.

HON. L.S. QEREQERETABUA.- Thank you, Honourable Chairman. SEG 1, there is an allocation of \$200,000 for the National Observers Programme and \$260,000 allocation for the Regional Observers Programme. It is the same allocation amount from last and we recognise the valuable but also very risky role that our Fiji people take up on this jobs as overseas observers, whether that is part of the National or Regional Observer Programme. Honourable Chairman, my question to the Honourable Minister, as part of this allocation:

1. How many Fiji Observers are in total, these two allocations look after; and
2. If all Fiji Observers have valid contracts that they signed before they go out which ably covers health, mental health, life insurance and compensation, because I believe that is very necessary.

I await with great interest to hear from the Minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Mr. Chairman, I cannot say the exact number but there are about 120 Observers who are employed on vessels within Fiji, and we contract them out for other Pacific Islands that do not have the capacity to provide Observers on their ships.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Ro Filipe Tuisawau, you have the floor.

HON. RO F. TUISAWAU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, in relation to that question, I understand this is also part of the Forum Fisheries Agency, the Observer Programme. Recently, there have been concerns about their safety. In fact, some have disappeared at sea. So, if you can confirm whether this is

part of that funding, and also what has been done about those who have disappeared from our regional perspective and whether they are Fiji citizens?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister.

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Mr. Chairman, since we have been established as an independent Ministry of Fisheries, the only person that was affected on this was one Observer who got sick in American Samoa and we brought his body back. There has never been any incident of people who are lost at sea.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, I will give the floor to the Honourable Qereqeretabua to move her motion on Head 31, Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG (1). You have the floor, madam.

HON. L.S. QEREQERETABUA.- Thank you, Honourable Chairman.

Honourable Chairman, my motion is that Head 31, Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG (1) be increased by \$1 million in respect on Seagoing Allowances Regional Observers Programme from its current allocation of \$260,000.

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- I second the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor, Honourable Qereqeretabua.

HON. L.S. QEREQERETABUA.- Thank you, Honourable Chairman.

Honourable Chairman, I know that the Honourable Minister knows of this particular incident well on 21st May, 2016, a gentleman by the name of Usaia Masibalavu passed away while serving as a Regional Observer for the Forum Fisheries Agencies (FFA) on board the US flagged tuna purse seine fishing vessel, the *FV Western Pacific*.

Now, the circumstances surrounding the death of Mr. Masibalavu remained unsolved to this day and its, of course, 2019. It is understood that he had reported a violation related to a shark finning on that Vessel. Mrs Masibalavu, to this date, has not received any information regarding his death or compensation, and the US Association for Professional Observers is also involved, trying to get justice for Mrs Masibalavu by seeking information from the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

My point, Honourable Chairman, is that the Honourable Minister must guarantee that this allocation covers that. He must confirm that this allocation covers insurance and compensation for the many, many similar violations that occur both in Fiji and the region. This august House cannot allow our people of Fiji to get on fishing vessels and monitor fisheries stock of high-value commercial fish species, if we are sending them to their deaths. Actually, if we could remove the \$1 million from Qorvis allocation to cover that, I am sure that could be done. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. The number of Observers whom we have now is basically being covered under this allocation. The Observers are under the jurisdiction of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC).

I understand the case that she is talking about. His was recovered from American Samoa and brought back to Fiji. I am not aware of the issues that related to what she is talking about. If she wants to know the details, she should go to the Ministry of Employment because that case will be dealt with at that level.

HON. L.S. QEREQERETABUA.- Thank you, Honourable Chairman. Through you, Honourable Chairman, can I just ask the Honourable Minister to please then answer my first question which was, whether all Fiji Observers have daily contracts that they sign which covers their health, mental health, life insurance and compensation. Thank you, Honourable Chairman.

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Honourable Chairman, they would naturally have to sign a contract to serve under the circumstances. They would not go onboard a foreign vessel that they have served on unless they sign a contract on the conditions of that attachment.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	20
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	4

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, I now give the floor to the Honourable Viliame Gavoka to move his motion on Head 31, Programme 2, Activity 3, SEG (8). You have the floor, Sir.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is in relation to what I always considered to be a vast source of wealth for our people in terms of the *beach-de-mer*. I know research and conservation programmes are in place, but I would like this to be increased to enable the Ministry to carry out research, conservation, and also do stocktaking. I know they are doing something like that but it underscores the desire to fully develop this commodity. It is one of the easiest to market. Honourable Chairman, I am told that when you take a container load or two container loads of *beach-de-mer* to Hong Kong, in two hours it is empty, it is all sold out. I mean, there is no other product in Fiji that sells that easily, our tourism, our sugar or whatever, but *beach-de-mer* has a very big market.

As you know, Honourable Chairman, it was one of the reasons why people came to Fiji, for sandalwood and *beach-de-mer*. So I really would like to see a development to consistently grow this and harvest it. I know there is conservation in place. It may take a few more years for that to be lifted, but it has to be treated in the same way as any commodity to be controlled properly, to be harvested properly, that we licence people who can sell this thing, because right now all sorts of people all over Fiji are buying from our villagers and some of them need to be licenced. There has to be regulation in this. It is quite a valuable commodity that is beneath our seas that I would like to see developed in a more structural manner. That is basically why I would like to see the Ministry to be resourced to carry that out, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Thank you, Honourable Chair, Sir. We have started with that in Galoa. We are carrying out research on sandfish and we have been successfully able to produce it within the laboratories. We have moved it around to all the MPAs around Fiji. Vanua Levu, the main areas in Bua, Cakaudrove and Macuata. They are the best recipients of this. All the *beche de mer*, the sandfish mainly that is now in Vanua Levu, in Cakaudrove and the coast of Macuata is actually from Bau waters. We have brought it in, put it into our research stations, reproduced them and then put them out again into the MPAs around Vanua Levu. The coastal areas of Bua and Macuata are very well aware of this scheme.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you, Honourable Minister. Honourable Rasova, you have the floor.

HON. S.R. RASOVA.- Thank you, Honourable Chair. I would just like to ask the Honourable Minister in regard to Programme 2, Activity 3, SEG 8 on Makogai Mariculture Development Centre.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- No, we are on the motion at the moment.

HON. S.R. RASOVA.- I am sorry, I withdraw.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You must have had a good lunch. You jumped in there.

We will vote on the motion, Honourable Members.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	21
Noes	:	27
Not voted	:	3

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, Activity 4?

(Chorus of `Ayes` and `Noes`)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Activity 5?

(Chorus of `Ayes` and `Noes`)

MR CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, I give the floor to Honourable Mitieli Bulanauca. Head 31, Programme 2, Activity 5, SEG 8., you have the floor.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. I would just like to put a motion to increase allocation of all those areas, Makogai Mariculture Development Centre (\$300,000); Pearl Oyster Research and Development Programme (\$295,200); Fisheries Research and Conservation Programme (\$300,000); Upgrade of Office and Quarters (\$200,000) by \$100,000 each. That is my motion, Sir. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister.

HON. S.R. RASOVA.- Mr. Chairman, I second the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Member, when you second the motion, do not just lift your hand up, I want to hear your elucidation. You have the floor.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- Thank you Honourable Chairman, Sir. I just want to clarify the need to increase the allocation. It is very important that our Research Stations in Fiji are up to par, and we need to improve the facilities including our quarters and research equipment that are there now and the various infrastructure particularly, jetty, landscape, roads and communication. They do not have communication there and it is important to uplift all these areas in order to have a more competitive thing in the market particularly in fisheries. It is very important that we put a lot more in there to be able to have a better research to compete in the market for export. Thank you, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister.

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Honourable Chairman, can I just have a clarification from the Honourable Member. Is he talking about Activity 5?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Activity 5, SEG 8.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- No, no, Sir, I am on Programme 2, Activity 3, SEG 8.

(Honourable Members interject)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- We are on Programme 2, Activity 5, SEG 8 – Coastal Fisheries Development. That is your motion.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- Yes, Sir, my motion is on Programme 2, Activity 3, SEG 8.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- No, we have gone past Activity 3.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- But, my motion I have submitted there, Sir.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBER.- No.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- We have gone past Activity 3, we have gone past Activity 4 and we are now on Activity 5.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- Okay.

(Honourable Members interject)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Your motion on?

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- Activity 5, SEG 8 – Coastal Fisheries Development (\$772,380). I am proposing to increase by \$500,000, that is my motion, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Is there a seconder?

HON. RATU T.N. NAVURELEVU.- I second the motion, Honourable Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor, Honourable Bulanauca.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. This motion is to increase the allocation particularly to help or assist our resource owners, the *qoliqoli* owners, to come into fisheries on commercial level rather than leaving them at subsistence level; a more commercial alignment. We need financial assistance for them to be able to enter into those commercial fishing activities. Thank you, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Thank you, Honourable Chairman. SEG 8 is basically looking at the funding to complete Wainigadru Ice Plant, Koro Ice Plant and the Staff Quarters in the District of Tawake. I am not really sure what the Honourable Member is trying to do, and I can tell him the figures on the completion of those projects.

(Honourable Members interject)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Rasova, you have the floor.

HON. S.R. RASOVA.- Thank you, Honourable Chairman. I would like to support the motion by Honourable Bulanauca, sorry.

(Laughter)

HON. S.R. RASOVA.- Coastal Fisheries Development, I think they have given almost \$772,380 and his given \$1.5 million.

For the whole of Fiji, there is more sea and less land, so there has to be a lot of attention there. I take it the decrease of allocation into a total expenditure by \$3.5 million. In regard to his statement the other day, he was trying to fulfil the obligations of the Ministry of Fisheries, and now they have cut everything to \$3.5 million. How can he?

(Laughter)

I would like to support the motion by Honourable Bulanauca to get that \$1.5 million for our people around the whole of Viti Levu, around Vanua Levu, around Lomaiviti, Lau, Yasawa to Kadavu ...

(Laughter)

... and the whole of Fiji, please. And Rotuma, Kioa and Rabi.

(Laughter)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Ro Filipe Tuisawau, you have the floor.

HON. RO F. TUISAWAU.- Thank you, Honourable Chairman. Speaking in support of the motion also in relation to the response by the Honourable Minister regarding the ice plants and those who are supplying, what kind of plans or what programmes are there to assist them in terms of their operations or fishermen businesses in that particular business? Does the Ministry have a programme to assist them, training in terms of their business development? Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister.

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Honourable Chairman, Sir, it is very difficult to make any contribution to this because they are really talking out of the subject under the heading that we are talking about, which I have already alluded to in my answer to that.

Honourable Rasova is talking about all over Fiji, but SEG 8 is very restricted in the funding, that is for that specific purpose. He is talking about the whole of Fiji.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Aseri Radrodro, you have the floor.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. I speak in support of the motion to increase the allocation for coastal fisheries development. I think rightly so there is need for more efficient and more effective measures to be developed by the Ministry of Fisheries. We have seen pictures and read stories of hammerhead sharks that were killed and found in the Bailey Bridge area; these are some of the instances of endangered species. With the reduced allocation, how can the Ministry ensure that there is efficient monitoring in terms of Fiji's contribution to the Convention for Endangered Species?

I speak in support of the motion, the allocation for coastal fisheries development needs to be increased to ensure that the services, the monitoring of the coastal area needs to be improved, increased to allow for the better implementation of the coastal fisheries laws and regulations.

I think this motion is warranted, it is valid and it also questions the reduction in allocation as to how can the Ministry ensure that what has been experienced in the past will never be repeated, and the commitment by the Ministry to ensure that these certain species are considered endangered through a convention (hammerhead sharks). This needs to be improved and the increase in allocation hopefully will improve the monitoring and effective work of the Ministry. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Thank you Honourable Chairman. In the last 2 years, Fisheries spent about 6 months visiting the whole of Fiji including all the islands, Vanua Levu, Viti Levu even including some islands in Vanua Levu that only have three people, and carrying out the public awareness on all the Fisheries activities. This is what was widely publicised on the work that has been carried out in the rural and maritime areas. I do not see any need to increase this amount again because we have carried out most of the work, and if there was any work to be done, it is only supplementary to the work we have already carried out.

HON. RO F. TUISAWAU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Coastal Fisheries Development as claimed, is it for ice-plants? You explained ice-plants for various activities. My previous question was not answered because when you have ice-plants, you will have fish stored there obviously for supply of the market. My question was, what is the Fisheries Department doing regarding assisting those fishermen in business development, such as training, access to market? I suppose this is extension-related because if you have an ice-plant, and you are storing fish, then how do you get it to the market? If you could just explain that then that will be great. Thank you.

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- We have 32 service centres around Fiji, 24 ice-plants, 5 research centres that have carried out the work that has been questioned here. For ice-plants, the Government basically provide ice to all our stations at a very normal rate. We are issuing it out to the fishermen at a cost of about \$0.15 a kilogram, the normal commercial rate is about \$0.30 a kilogram. We have provided everything, we have carried out the consultations with them, we have provided market access, we have given them solar ice freezers for the areas that do not have sufficient water and do not have the capacity to be able to support ice-plants.

Our work has been quite extensive, and I do not understand why they are coming up with this. If there is any field work that needs to be done, it is basically the small tiny islands like Naqelevu where they only have three people living on the island, we are supporting them. For Cikobia, we have provided solar ice freezers, every work that is necessary to be done has been carried out. I think they are a bit confused with this Coastal Fisheries Development. This is basically the development that we do to help them carry out fishing activities, Fish Aggregating Device (FAD), providing them with fishing gears so that they are able to do their catches, we have connected that.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will vote on this amendment.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	23
Noes	:	27
Not voted	:	1

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, Activity 6 – Aquaculture, Development Programme. Honourable Members, I now give the floor to the Honourable Anare Jale to move his motion on Head 31, Programme 2, Activity 6, SEG 8. You have the floor, Sir.

HON. A. JALE.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman Sir. On SEG 8 – Seaweed Development Programme, I move that the allocation on that be increased by \$1 million.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Mr. Chairman, Sir, I second the motion.

HON. A. JALE.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, seaweed is for the sea and it is really in respect of people that live in coastal areas and also in the smaller islands in Fiji. We have been talking about opportunities for some of these remote areas, urban drifters have been a problem because economic activities are scarce so they have to find a way to earn their living. Seaweed has been growing well in some areas like the coastal areas in Tailevu, I think in Ra and I think in the Lau Group, which had thrived at that time.

The Ministry has indicated its intention to continue to develop that particular product and I support that strongly. It had worked before, it has provided the resources for people to live in areas who are really very poor, I would say, people are finding it difficult to live. That was a means of living for them, but unfortunately, some years ago, the cost of transportation has killed this industry. They could not find a way to bring their products to the market because the value of the product was less than the cost of transportation. The reason why I am asking for an increase in that sector in that allocation is that they need to take into consideration the seedlings that you need to provide to revive this industry or this sector.

Secondly, the planting materials, the ropes, the things that need to go with it, drying material and also with that goes the provision of outboard or punts and engines for the fishermen or the people or villagers who go out to do the seaweed farming. The shipping should also be considered as I said transportation is always the biggest cost for people who want to transport their dried seaweed to the market.

Sir, I think that is the reason because when we look at the amount it is small, but I need to emphasise, Mr. Chairman, that a lot of people in Fiji who come from areas that do not have much means of living have lived, and were able to be supported by seaweed farming.

I commend the Honourable Minister for Fisheries for the initiative to revive this because there are some islands, I know they have already visited a lot of islands around Fiji, and he has found out for himself the difficulties that people are facing. I think developing seaweed farming in some of the areas in Fiji where it had been successful in the past is the way to go, to provide the means of living for those people. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The seaweed had a problem because of the climate change. The warm water has basically killed off the seaweed that we have in Fiji. We have an agreement now with Indonesia who provided this initiation. We will be sending six farmers to Indonesia, funded by the Indonesian Government, to see what they have done in Indonesia, to be able to develop new species that will be able to adapt to the climate change and increase in seawater temperature. What we are doing at the moment, we will be looking at seaweed farmers around Fiji, six farmers will go to Indonesia with our technical staff to try and learn what they have done in Indonesia to look after this issue.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just my contribution to the motion at hand, the question to the Honourable Minister, in this Seaweed Development Programme, does the allocation also include value-adding to the product of seaweed? Does it involve value-adding?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister.

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Mr. Chairman, Sir, yes, this team that will be traveling to Indonesia will also undertake training on value-adding, and we are hoping that we will be able to bring technical expertise to Fiji to be stationed here to coach us to do the Programme.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will now vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	22
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	2

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, Parliament will now vote on Head 31, that the amount for Head 31 – Ministry of Fisheries, be approved.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	27
Noes	:	22
Not Voted	:	2

Head 31 agreed to.

Head 32 –Ministry of Forests

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, Head 32, Programme 1, Activity 1 – Policy and Administration.

(Chorus of `Ayes` and `Noes`)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Leawere, you have the floor.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is an increase on Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 1. Can we have a clarification from the Honourable Minister, Mr. Chairman, on that increase, please?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Mr. Chair, the decrease is due to the 5 percent decrease of the whole Government Ministries on Personal Emoluments. There is no effect within the Ministry as there are no deduction in salaries and no layoffs.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Activity 2.

(Chorus of `Noes`)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, I give the floor to the Honourable Viliame Gavoka to move his motion on Head 32, Programme 1, Activity 2, SEG 7. You have the floor, Sir.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I move that the allocation for Industry Consultation which sits at \$40,000 be increased by \$60,000 to bring it to \$100,000.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- I second the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you, you have the floor, Honourable Member.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Mr. Chair, this comes from the concern that we have that a number of issues regarding the lease of land need consultation on a regular basis because when I meet with our people, say in Nadroga, there is about 110 landowning units, there is a lot of confusion on some of the terms of the lease they agreed to. In particular, Mr. Chairman, a lot of them have agreed to renew the leases for Fiji Pine for the next crop, which would run into 50 years or 99 years, I do not have the exact figure.

For instance, when they were asked to renew the leases which expire in a couple of years' time they were told they would be paid the lease bonus before the election last year. Up to this year, Mr. Chairman, couple of months ago they claimed that no such payment had been received. I have written to the Ministry, I have written to the company, and they say it is with TLTB. Our people talked with the people from the Fiji Pine, from the Ministry, and they see this as passing the buck from here to there. They do not understand when people want their lease all sorts of promises are made, but when it comes to payments all sorts of excuses are given. So, that is why I would like to see more consultation. I know it can be laborious but that is the nature of the base our people need consultation at very regular intervals, and very intense in some cases.

For instance, Mr. Chairman, our people now understand that the lease bonus will be out of 100 percent, 30 percent will be given to individuals, 70 percent will be kept by Fiji Pine and then they will disburse the funds on need or request basis.

What they say, Mr. Chairman, there are already trusts that have been set up over the years with the beginning of Fiji Pine. All these trusts are legitimate. They submit their Annual Reports to the authorities; they have their pin numbers and all that. They would like that fund to go into the trust to enable them to make developments that are part of the objectives of the fund of the trust.

In the process, Mr. Chairman, they be given the opportunity to learn about commercial activities, and all they need for Fiji Pine to do is to monitor the way they are using the funds. It should not be Fiji Pine giving the funds to people who approach them. They could come from another mataqali so that is an issue they could go in the wrong hands. But what is critical is for them to use the trust, they have been set up for years and like I said they are legitimate and there are people to run them and they would like to see the 70 percent to go into the trust. These are some of the issue that have come up, and that is why I am recommending that the funding for consultation to be increased to enable more dialogue with the landowners.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Mr. Chairman, we are discussing about the Ministry of Forest Budget and the industry consultation within the Ministry. I think the allocation is enough for the Ministry to carry its allocation in the industry. We normally work together with the Ministry of Agriculture during the roadshow and the Ministry for Maritime and Development, we all attend and this is what this Budget is for. He is talking about Fiji Pine, it is a corporate entity, the commercial companies deals with its own affairs.

(Honourable Members interjected).

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- All those issues he is saying, he is misleading the House, and misleading Fiji. Fiji Pine Trust looks after their affairs.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- So, in Parliament where do they go?

HON. MEMBER.- They go to you.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- It is nice and sweet to say that this is not my business, so where do they go; who do they go to?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Mr. Chairman, Sir, just from a legal perspective, yes, you do need to follow the law, otherwise you will have anarchy.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- When you want their land....

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Mr. Chair, Sir, the Budget here is about the allocation for the Ministry of Forests, and the Honourable Minister has already highlighted that. This is about industry consultation they do have. In respect of what the Honourable Member from the other side is saying, he is talking about where do they go? There is actually a Fiji Pine Trust that is made up of landowners, and landowner representatives they go to them, they discuss with them. It is not as if they people are left in abeyance.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Mr. Chairman, just to add on, when the landowners have any issue through Fiji Pine Trust, they approach the Ministry of Forest. I actually went with the Fiji Pine Trust in various stations, visited 6 stations, 4 in Viti Levu and 2 in Vanua Levu. All these issues we clearly thrashed out, all the issues that has been raised by the Honourable Member is all misleading.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will vote on this motion.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	21
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	3

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, Programme 2, Activity 1 – Forestry.

(Chorus of `Ayes` and `Noes`)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, I give the floor to Honourable Lynda Tabuya. You have the floor.

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, SEG 7, Public Consultation on the Review of Forest Laws (\$20,000). I would like to ask the Honourable Minister, could you clarify what laws are being reviewed, who is undertaking the review? Is there a Bill ready or any draft legislation, and when do we hope to see it here in Parliament? Thank you.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- This provision is for the public consultation and the review of the forest in all the 4 divisions including maritime islands. The consultation for the Forest Bill has been enabled for

public awareness and right now, the Bill is in the Solicitor General's Office for vetting before it is brought to Parliament.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Same SEG, honourable Chair, and this is on the Rewa Delta Mangrove Project, if he can clarify where it is now?

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Mr. Chairman Sir, this is the Government's contribution as a levy to this organisation, ITTO.

HON. RO F. TUISAWAU.- Still on that mangrove, could you clarify what happened regarding the allocation for the Rewa Delta Project last year which was allocated \$91,935, and it has been allocated the same amount. The other issue, are you still issuing licences for mangrove cutting? Thank you.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- We provide for staff salaries, their meal allowances, vehicle maintenance and we also organise meetings in the villages. In regards to the mangrove licences, yes, we still issue the licence.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Niko Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- I have a question seeking clarification, Mr. Chairman, in relation to the Fiji Pine Trust. As you know, the Fiji Pine Trust headquarters in Lautoka is dead. It is rundown, it is like a shack.

(Honourable Member interjects)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Yes! Have you been there?

HON. MEMBER.- What is the query?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Have you been there? The query is that amount to refurbish it.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Which SEG?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- SEG 6 – Fiji Pine Trust - Extension \$745,102.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Mr. Chair, this allocation is to cater for the maritime areas especially the pine schemes in the maritime.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- No. It says "Fiji Pine Trust– Extension".

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- To carry out silviculture operations and also the payment of wages and salaries for the admin staff, all included here. Unlike the Mahogany Trust, for the admin only which is \$250,000 provided by the Office of the Prime Minister. The Fiji Pine Trust, the extension arm, these functions were previously carried out by the Ministry of Forests but has been taken once Fiji Pine Ltd was corporatised. So it will take over all the pine development in Fiji. So both the management and also the supervision of all the development of nurseries and also the harvesting operations in the maritime and interior of Viti Levu and Vanua Levu.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Bulanauca, you have the floor to move your motion. Head 32 – Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG 6. You have the floor.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG 6. This is on Fiji Pine Trust - Extension which is \$745,102. I am proposing for an additional \$254,898, that is my motion.

HON. RATU T. NAVURELEVU.- Mr. Chairman, I second the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor, Honourable Bulanauca.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. We all understand what Fiji Pine Trust was established for and all the extensions that was required to be done there. But this additional money that I am proposing is to add more intensity in increasing the pine landowners that they can own it themselves, increasing plantations for private woodlots that encourage them to grow pine on their own land and be the owners themselves in the future. At the same time, we will be contributing to the four million trees planting programme that we have to achieve. Together, will regrow the hills, that is the explanation behind the need for an increase of \$254,898 to make it \$1 million. That is the motion, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Mr. Chair, I think the amount is sufficient for them to carry out their plantation development programme.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Niko Nawaikula, you have the floor.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Thank you. I wish to support the motion for an increase. To the Honourable Minister, as we have said, we assess you from this side of the House on the outcome, and the outcome we see in relation to the Fiji Pine Trust is nil. It is totally nil.

(Honourable Members interjecting)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Allow me to go back to how all this started. The initial purpose of Fiji Pine was green gold, an avenue to facilitate the ownership of the resource by landowners...

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- You're confusing yourself.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- ...and it has not reached that. What the Government has done is to incorporate another small company, Fiji Pine Trust, to look after the interests of the landowners for that purpose. And from this side of the House, we see that has not been done. Even the point that the Honourable Minister is saying for their extension and harvesting work, they cannot perform that. If you go from Nabouwalu to Labasa, you look at the pine trees there, they are just cutting, cutting and cutting, no replanting. And you ask, where does Fiji Pine fit into that? Where does the landowners fit into that because the landowners go through, as the Honourable Minister stated, Fiji Pine? So they need to be empowered to be able to possess what was decided for them. That is the reason why the increase is necessary, to empower them so that they can do what they are supposed to do.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	20
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	4

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, Activity 2?

(Chorus of 'Noes')

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Activity 3, Honourable Nawaikula, you have the floor.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- The Honourable Minister has rightfully said that there has been a 5 percent reduction in the allocation to Staff and Wage Earners. There is SEG 5 – Forestry Training Centre, would you be able to tell the House, with that allocation how many new forestry graduates from the Forestry Training Centre as well as FNU, can you absorb or employ in your Ministry next year?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Mr. Chairman, SEG 5 is about the purchase of goods and services and has nothing to do with the salaries.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Forestry Training Centre, you are probably looking at the wrong SEG. Can you employ graduates from the Forestry Training Centre this year?

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Training expenses.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Yes or no, that is all we need to know. Programme 2-3(5) - Forestry Training Centre.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- What is the detail?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- There has been a reduction, so can you employ graduates this year or not?

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Once they are trained and complete their training and if there is a vacancy, then we recruit. We follow the same process through OMRS.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Mr. Chairman, if I can also assist the Honourable Member, this training is also for people from outside who the forestry has as partners. So this is the cost of the upkeep of the Training Centre.

The training courses cost money. The interested individuals or groups could involve landowner groups, who may be getting into forest cutting, education, et cetera. It is for them and it is not individuals who are employed by the Ministry. So there is a lot of ways in terms of foresters, there is manual harvesting, chainsaw harvesting, et cetera. It is the training for them, it has got nothing to do with the hiring of people.

MR CHAIRMAN.- Honourable, Members, Activity 3?

(Chorus of 'Noes')

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Activity 4, Honourable Vosanibola.

HON. P.W. VOSANIBOLA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Activity 4 - Silviculture Research, Resource Assessment and Development. Looking at the allocations, it seems there is no element of research. Can the Honourable Minister advise us on the research element within that activity.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Mr. Chairman, it is about the people who carry out the research and the facilities are out there in Colo-i-Suva.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- If you look at the next Activity over the page, Activity 5, it says Timber Utilisation Research and Product Development, it all fits into that.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Activity 5, Honourable Tikoduadua.

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- I was raising my hand earlier for a question on Programme 2-4.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- We are on Activity 5. Honourable Lynda Tabuya, you have the floor.

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I commend the increase for the allocation in Programme 2-5 in terms of the Forestry Extension Services which is the Reforestation of Degraded Forests and Indigenous Species, totalling \$1.05 million. Would the Minister, please...

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- What SEG?

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- My apologies, Honourable Chairman, it is actually in Programme 2-6(8), not Activity 5.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Vosanibola, you have a motion on Head 32-2-5(8).

HON. P.W. VOSANIBOLA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the mentioned Activity and Head 32-2-5(8) be increased by \$50,000 in respect of Sandalwood Development Programme.

HON. S.R. RASOVA.- I second the motion.

HON. P.W. VOSANIBOLA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe this allocation needs a bit more help to ensure that more sandalwood seedlings are available to the community, and also with a proper tracking mechanism for the seedlings by Division and within the areas that would be covered and help the Ministry forecast the harvesting years down the line. As we all know that this commodity after harvest is in demand locally and also abroad. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Is there a seconder?

HON. S.R. RASOVA.- I second the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Vosanibola, you have the floor.

HON. P.W. VOSANIBOLA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairmans. As I have alluded to earlier, this allocation needs more funds, it is only \$50,000. All the increase required from this side, I think this is the lowest one and I hope that you will agree with this side of the House. It is only to ensure that more sandalwood seedlings are available to our communities, from the villages, settlements and it will also enable the Ministry of Forests to track down its seedlings and also the mechanism of where the farms are in terms of the Sandalwood Programme. As I have said earlier, this commodity after harvest is in demand economically, locally and also abroad. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Sir, I wish to contribute for the following reasons. I travel from here to Lautoka and pass all the villages, and travel from Nabouwalu to Labasa and also pass all the villages. I

have never seen a sandalwood plantation, except the one at Nausori. When you approach Nausori, there is a small one there. I was wondering where are these?

In the villages, the only place where you see the sandalwood is around their houses. But you look at the hill and the hill starts from here to Nausori, there is no forest there. It is just *gasau*, it is good for sandalwood. So, where is it? What is wrong? There is no connection, we need to connect. We need to connect, then we will have all the periphery outside the villages full of sandalwood. You need that input because there is disconnection, no connection. There is something wrong.

(Chorus of interjections)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order!

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- There are gaps, gaps, gaps. We do not have the answer, you should have the answer. If you do not have the answer, come this side.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBER.- Listen! Listen to the answer!

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order, order.

Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Mr. Chairman, I think the Honourable Member is outside of Fiji. He is not aware of what is happening. He should thank this side of the House, that has revived the sandalwood industry. It is the work of the Bainimarama-led Government.

Sandalwood trade was the first trade in Fiji that enabled the traders to visit Fiji, and *bech-de-mer*. But no other Government has taken the initiative to keep on planting, only the Bainimarama-led Government. We have initiated to plant sandalwood again to revive the industry.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- It's only talk, talk, talk!

HON. O. NAIQAMA.- It is not talk, it is not talk! Now, we are at a stage where we are gathering all the information and we have to put it as an industry to process here in Fiji.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister for Defence, you have the floor.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me also add that the problem with the Honourable Member is that when he travels, he has his eyes closed or he just follows the main routes rather than going the dirty roads where all the farms exist. If he had been travelling to Lautoka, past the Nabou Plant on the right, he will see a plantation there. Honourable Member, the next time you go down there, keep your eyes open, see the first plantation. If you go to Nasarawaqa, Bua, you have the big plantation there, owned by a Korean national. But, of course...

(Honourable Member interjected)

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- That is the involvement of the Ministry. Nurseries have been established in the villages in Macuata and Bua through the Ministry of Forests. I can take you to my village next week and also see one that we have by the Ministry which you can see with your very own eyes. So, you need to travel more and keep your eyes open. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- The Honourable Member is not saying which village, whether his village in Tailevu or in Macuata. Honourable Minister for Agriculture.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- There is a thousand sandalwood trees in Bilalevu, Valley Road, Sigatoka. So tell him to go there and see it.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	23
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	1

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Activity 6, Honourable Lynda Tabuya, you have the floor.

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under Programme 2, Activity 6, SEG 8. I was actually on that occasion commending the other side and they did not listen, I get told still that I am wasting time. But I wish to commend the increase of the allocation for this particular project.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBER.- Thank you.

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- You welcome. Could the Honourable Minister please inform this Committee, SEG 8 - Reforestation of Degraded Forests with Indigenous and Other Species, not just mangroves. Inform us about this allocation, how was it utilised in the past year and what is the progress of this reforestation project of indigenous species? Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Mr. Chairman, the Ministry has taken a bold initiative to revive the nursery for indigenous species, and Government had budgeted in the last financial year \$250,000 and we have started. Early this year we have come up with a bold policy to plant four million trees in four years, so we have started with one million trees this year. I have been going around Fiji, visiting all the districts and all the provinces. Last week I was in Kadavu, clearly spreading the message to plant more trees. I visited Honourable Tabuya's village in Tiliva and we planted 100 seedlings. Right now we have planted more than 300,000 seedlings of all the species including fruit trees, timber trees and commercial trees for sawn timber.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Leawere, you have the floor.

HON. M.R. LEAWARE.- Mr. Chairman, just some clarification from the Honourable Minister. We hear that he is talking about planting which is very good, is there any indication of what the Ministry will do in terms of other wood? Is it also part of their programme? Thank you.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Ministry is still at its research stage, we are still researching on the other wood. This is still with our research team in Colo-i-Suva.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Ro Filipe Tuisawau.

HON. RO F. TUISAWAU.- Thank you Mr. Chairman. On SEG 7 - Monitoring and Surveillance of Logging which is a major concern, there had been some cases which had been highlighted, I think in Bua and a few other areas.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBERS.- No SEG 7?

HON. RO F. TUISAWAU.- I just read it out.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBERS.- Where?

HON. RO F. TUISAWAU.- Head 32, Programme 2, Activity?

HON. MEMBERS.- 6.

HON. RO F. TUISAWAU.- Sorry, I am on Activity 8.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Leader of the Opposition, you have the floor.

HON. MAJOR-GENERAL (RET'D) S.L. RABUKA.- Thank you Mr. Chairman, Sir. I have a question for the Honourable Minister for Forests. Were there attempts to replant or revive natural species or indigenous species? In the past there used to be a levy on natural forest harvesters, there used to be a tax or something levied on them to go back into reforestation? I wonder whether that is still happening. *Vinaka.*

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Mr. Chairman, Government has allocated \$250,000 in the last financial year and this year again another \$250,000 for the indigenous species. Then we also put in the licensing conditions for any contractor who removes any native species for the replanting programme.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Mr. Chair, if I can just add to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. We are the only Government that made a specific allocation for reforestation of indigenous species. If you go back into the Budget (do not laugh) it is actually a true fact. It really is quite critical and I am sure the Honourable Leader of the Opposition will appreciate it because you were not around that time when he was in Government. It is quite true. Because we were actually very worried because many of the indigenous hardwood species were actually being simply just taken out of the forest and not being replanted. So this is a very important project for us, in fact, we see the allocation is still in excess of \$1 million and we want to continue with that.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Activity 7.

(Chorus of `Ayes` and `Noes`)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Qereqeretabua, you have the floor.

HON. L.S. QEREQERETABUA.- Thank you, Honourable Chair. Honourable Chair, on Head 32, Programme 2, Activity 7, SEG 9 – Maritime Pine Development in Cicia, Gau and Kadavu. At this juncture, it would be remiss of me if I did not thank the Honourable Minister on behalf of the people of my village Dravuni, the *Turaga Na Ramalo* and also the people of the *Yavusa* Natusara for accepting our very humble invite to our village, and for beginning your Kadavu tour in the beautiful island of Dravuni. My question, Honourable Minister is with the \$1 million allocation for maritime pine development for Cicia, Gau and Kadavu, could you please Honourable Minister clarify the details of this activity. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Minister.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Thank you Mr. Chair. The allocation is sufficient to buy machines to utilise on the matured plantations in the maritime islands. For Lomaiviti, we have already installed portable

sawmills, likewise in Kadavu, we will be purchasing portable sawmills and also mills will be installed in Vunisea to cater for all pine schemes around Vunisea.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Ro Filipe Tuisawau, you have the floor.

HON. RO F. TUISAWAU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I was alluding to before regarding SEG 7 – Monitoring and Surveillance of Logging, there have been some instances where there have been complaints about logging or uncontrolled logging which leads to soil erosion and damage to the streams in terms of the environment, et cetera. Could the Honourable Minister please just enlighten us on measures in place regarding strengthening this role; monitoring and surveillance of loggers, their activities and also the effects of that on the environment, particularly the streams. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Mr. Chair, for the information of the august House, before any logging operation commences, the Ministry ensures that EIA has been carried out and approved by the Ministry of Environment. Once we receive this, then the Ministry issues the right harvesting license to the contractors and for all the loggers to follow the Logging Code of Practice which is strictly monitored by the Ministry.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Nawaikula, you have the floor.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- On SEG 7, could the Honourable Minister enlighten the House, how many in the last year or even 10 years, prosecution has been done successfully against loggers who breached the Logging Code or the EIA?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Mr. Chair, I do not have the figures with me, I can provide it to him later.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Ro Teimumu Kepa, you have the floor.

HON. RO T.V. KEP A.- Thank you, Mr. Chair. You have been ignoring me for the last few minutes.

(Laughter)

HON. RO T.V. KEP A.- I really wanted to ask this question on your behalf and this is for SEG 9 – Purchase of Equipment – Lakeba Pine Scheme.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- My pleasure.

HON. RO T.V. KEP A.- If you can clarify that, please.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Mr. Chair, we are buying the logging machineries to assist the pine scheme owners in Lakeba. They have changed their decision. Before we inserted the sawmilling machines, they have decided to change, they now will buy the machinery for logging.

HON. RO T.V. KEP A.- Mr .Chairman, what will that machine do that the previous portable sawmill could not do? Can you just clarify that, please, Honourable Minister?

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Mr. Chairman, it is the logging machinery that we are buying now. Before in the budget, they were requesting the other machines for processing the timber. They have changed, they want the logging machines.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister.

HON. COL. LT. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Just very quickly, Sir, if I might just add because this Maritime Pine Scheme started in 2013, I was forestry then before we went into elections. My bit of background, the problem that we had, we had pines growing but the private sectors were not willing to come because of the costs involved and that is why the landowners, pine owners and communities (because it is outside Fiji Pine) came back to Government and asked for assistance. These sets of machines:

- i) Logging machines, where they have the sort of skidder type but felling is done; and
- ii) The key major one in this is the new brand of portable sawmill. It is just a matter of adjusting the blades. With the same machine you can do the big planks and then you can do the floor just by the adjustments.

So, it is very state of the art technology and of course we are mindful of termites as well. Part of the package is logging, ripping and treatment as well. It is a total package for the maritime communities.

HON. RO. T.V. KEPANA.- Is there any training for that before they use those machines?

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Yes.

HON. RO. T.V. KEPANA.- Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Anare Jale, you have the floor to move a motion - Head 32, Programme 2, Activity 7, SEG 9.

HON. A. JALE.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, my motion is to increase the allocation for Maritime Pine Development from \$1 million to \$2 million.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Is there a seconder?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Mr. Chair, Sir, I second the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Anare Jale, you have the floor.

HON. A. JALE.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Pine Scheme in some of those islands named in the Budget (Cicia, Gau, Kadavu and others) they started around 1960s and most of those pines are now ready for harvesting.

I think what the Government should consider now is not only providing the machinery to rip those timber because the quantity or volume of the pine timber in those islands exceed the need of those islands in terms of materials that are needed for rebuilding their homes. The timber need to be marketed and I think the Honourable Minister need to consider a way to help those people who own those plantations in Lakeba. I think the volume of timber in the province of Lau has already been surveyed and established by your Ministry, Honourable Minister. There are millions of dollars' worth of pine in those islands that are standing there not harvested but are subject to adverse weather. We are constantly hit by cyclones. *TC Gita* had done some damages to pine in some of those islands. It is time now that those pine trees should be ripped and put to good use.

I know my motion is going to fail but I am putting that to you, Honourable Minister, if you can consider a way to get some money out of those trees for the development of those islands. Give back to those islanders who invested in the planting of pine in 1960s. The one in Lakeba is not being utilised until now, although they have gone into so many schemes to harvest the pine trees in there. I am suggesting to look at Kadavu, Gau, the maritime provinces and see how those trees can be better utilised by Government, ripping up those logs, timbers or pine and put them to good use. Government paid those islanders, paid the timber from them so that they can have some money. *Vinaka vakalevu.*

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Mr. Chair, for the Honourable Member's information, the Bainimarama Government has allocated funds at Nasinu, similar to the arrangement for the AMA (Agricultural Marketing Authority) in Agriculture whereby it works with the communities. It helped them with their market for them to sell their pine products, so they have set up in Nasinu. Right now, we are in the process for all the necessary equipment and machinery to be sent to all these schemes and for us to be in Nasinu as a marketing arm. Government has allocated certain funds so there is TMA, especially in the area the Honourable Member is highlighting in this House, so we are ready, we are looking towards that direction.

HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.- Mr. Chair, these maritime islands that have pine, the previous governments have not been able to bring them down because of the money that will be required to cut them and bring them down to the ports, they need to build ports. I am talking about Kadavu, Gau, Cicia, very expensive and this is the reason why they have not been done by previous governments. What we have done, we have put up little portable sawmills for those people to do their own cutting and build their own homes, churches and whatever they want to build, and that is what is happening here.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Just to give some assurance as well to the Honourable Jale, the Commissioner Eastern is very much involved in this project and the arrangement, Honourable Chair, Sir, if they want to utilise some of the timber, that is the priority and it is tied in with the Rural Housing Scheme. They identify what is needed for them.

The first scheme that worked successfully was in Makadru Village in Matuku. They have built a few houses, they identified how many houses are needed and then the Ministry of Rural Housing brings the rest of the materials, so they built their houses. The surplus is then organised again, and that is why Government purchased the three barges lately so that we can bring back. Gau, it was Lovu Village. Kadavu, initially, it started with Green Gold but then Green Gold realised that they cannot bring it to Sawani, the sawmill just at the corner of Vuniniudrovu Pumping Station; that is Green Gold, that is the current arrangement. They identify their needs and surplus, the Commissioner's Office will organise through Government Shipping, if it can be uplifted, they will organise the buyers and whatever.

In terms of trees after disaster, unfortunately, we could not do this in Vanua Balavu and most of the maritime islands, but in the West when we had *TC Evans* in 2014, all the trees in most areas of the Western Division were collected and sold to Punjas and FEA for their chips for power-generation. In that way, the victims of the cyclone also benefitted from the trees that fell during cyclone. The Commissioners are very much involved in this project, Honourable Member.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will now vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	23
Noes	:	27
Not voted	:	1

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, Activity 8.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Honourable Chair. Just on Programme 2, Activity 8, SEG 5: Boundary Delineation for Nature and Forest Reserves (\$35,000); Compensation for Forest Reserves (\$60,000). Can we get a clarification on this Compensation for Forest Reserves, whether it also includes Sovi Basin Forest Reserve and the Water Catchments Forest Reserves - Compensation for Forest Reserves of \$60,000?

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Mr. Chairman, this is the compensation on *iTaukei* leases that were used as reserves throughout Fiji, including reserve used as a water source catchment.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- What about the Sovi Basin, is it also included in this Compensation Reserve?

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- No, Sovi Basin comes under Nature Trust.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Yes, this is where there is Forest Reserves.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Forest Reserves.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- This is where there are forest reserves, administered by the Ministry of Forests, it is only for those. If anybody is going to use it for some other purpose, whether it is for a dam for electricity or Water Authority of Fiji, whatever, they pay the compensation. This is for only those that come under the Ministry of Forests.

HON. MAJOR-GENERAL (RET'D) S.L. RABUKA.- Mr. Chair, the question on Sovi Basin, not for water catchment or anything. It is for Government, and they are not allowed to go in there and use it. Are they compensated out of this or from another

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- As mentioned, only if it is administered by the Ministry of Forests, this compensation is for that. If it is for some other purpose or some other governmental agency, they will take care of that compensation.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, Parliament will now vote on Head 32, that the amount of Head 32 – Ministry of Forests, be approved.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of `Ayes` and `Noes`)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	27
Noes	:	23
Not voted	:	1

Head 32 agreed to.

Head 33 – Ministry of Lands and Mineral Resources

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, the floor is now open for any comments, Head 33, Programme 1, Activity 1.

(Chorus of 'Ayes' and 'Noes')

HON. M.R. LEAWARE.- Clarification, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor.

HON. M.R. LEAWARE.- Thank you, Sir. Mr. Chairman, can the Honourable Minister provide some clarification in this House on the Established Staff in terms of SEG 1 – Personal Emoluments? There is a reduction, does that mean that there is a reduction in the salary of the Minister as well? Thank you.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- No, Honourable Chairman, but I think the Honourable Member is a bit mistaken. When the amount goes down for Personal Emoluments, that does not mean that there will be a cut in salaries or there will be any redundancies. What it basically means is that, if there was allocation previously to fill in some vacant positions, we will not require them to be filled. What it basically means is that we can multi-task, we can have our staff do a bit more work and cover those spaces. Take for instance, if I ask for a file from a particular staff, he does not need to bring the file to me, he can actually read it for me as well, that is multi-tasking, that does not affect anyone's salary or positions. Thank you, Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Tikoduadua.

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- Thank you, Honourable Chairman. Sir, can the Honourable Minister advise as to when will this august House expect to receive some of the overdue Annual Reports of his Ministry? This concern, as I have alluded to earlier yesterday, also for other Ministries, there is no record of any reports from this Ministry at all being tabled in Parliament. This leads to many questions that will be raised as to the activities and expenditure of previous Budgetary allocations that will be raised in the Committee. The question also arises because civil servants, for that matter, are fearful of answering letters and queries from the Opposition Office because unlike most democratic governments, the FijiFirst Government has created that atmosphere of 'fear' ...

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Who says that?

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- ... in the Civil Service and given strict instructions ...

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- That's not true.

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- ... that they are marked to release information usually publicly available to the Opposition Members of this House as it would be any other Government.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Member, which Activity are you talking about?

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- Programme 1, Activity 1, Mr. Chairman.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Which SEG?

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- SEG 5, Honourable Chairman - Publications.

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. MEMBER.- Annual Report.

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- Yes, no report coming from the Ministry.

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Mr. Chairman, if I may, the Honourable Member's question is totally misconstrued. He has made some allegations which are not true. In fact, Honourable Former Leader of the Opposition would testify that one of my first clients to the Office was herself, with the Honourable Ratu Suliano Matanitobua. So there is no reason why he has any reasons to believe that the Government is fearful or staff is fearful of answering Opposition questions, even my door is always open for them to come. But this SEG in fact talks about Periodicals and Publications which are to cater for purchase of books and periodicals for our staff, it is not for our publications. In fact

(Honourable Member interjects)

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- No, you listen to what I am saying first, the Honourable Member's question is misconstrued, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Programme 2 - Mineral Resources, Activity 1 - Geological and Mineral Investigation.

(Chorus of "Ayes" and "Noes")

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Activity 1 - Geological and Mineral Investigation.

HON. RO F. TUISAWAU.- Thank you, Honourable Chairman. With regards to SEG 5, there is an allocation for Seismology (\$346,874). I understand the same amount was featured last year, could you explain the progress or is that a regular allocation? Thank you.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Yes, Honourable Chair, for Seismology, the amount remains the same because the provision is to cater for monitoring of the seismology activities, and that is operated on 24/7 basis. The additional allocation allows us to recruit two more officers, but we have managed that through dividing the shifts. So, same amount will be used to fulfil the activities, seismic monitoring 24/7.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Ratu Atonio Lalabalavu.

HON. DR. RATU A.R. LALABALAVU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to seek clarification with regards to Activity 1, SEG 8 - Groundwater Assessment and Development – Small Islands. I think Taveuni comes under large islands.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Sorry, you still asking your question?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Clarification on SEG 8.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Thank you, Honourable Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Groundwater Assessment and Development – Small Islands.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Yes, Honourable Chairman, I had mentioned in my budget response as well that there is a total allocation of \$600,000 for Assessment of Groundwater, of this we have already done investigation in the last financial year alone, 14 ground assessment investigation for small islands, 63 for large islands, and 7 groundwater drilling for small islands, 8 for large islands, and one(1) reticulation for small islands and 7 for large islands. The project is a continuing project, it is well underway and that allocation is sufficient to cater for small islands as well as large islands. If the Honourable Member needs

specific island and specific area that he is willing to speak about he can come to my office, and I will show him the whole plan.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Tikoduadua, you have the floor.

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- For clarification, just on the issue that was raised earlier on groundwater assessment. Honourable Chairman, I just wanted to find out from the Honourable Minister whether for the bigger islands, whether there was any consideration given to Navakawau in Taveuni; so many attempts to find water there through drilling. Would that also be looked at? Thank you.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- For those specific areas, Honourable Chairman, I don't have a listing of the specific areas, but I have the numbers here. But if you have a special query, we can definitely look into that. What my team does is when there is a request, the whole team goes out, scopes for water and sometimes we do drill rigs and we don't get any water, but that doesn't mean we leave the project there because there are people who need to be served. So we have in fact imported a new drill rig from Italy, I think that will be able to solve these problems.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Ro Filipe Tuisawau, you have the floor.

HON. RO F. TUISAWAU.- Thank you Honourable Chairman. On SEG 6, Contribution to SOPAC (\$32,100). I understand SOPAC has been split from 01 January, 2011 into South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and Secretariat of Pacific Community (SPC), which is now their Geo-Science Programme. Just wondering, is it our contribution to SPC, because SOPAC no longer exists? Thank you.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Thank you, Honourable Chairman. That allocation is for hosting of the Science Technology and Research Network Conference and, yes you are right, it was formally SOPAC, now it is hosted by SPC-GM Division, but it is also co-hosted by the Ministry for Mineral Resources. So it does cover SPC and the Ministry collaboration.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Activity 2.

(Chorus of 'Ayes' and 'Noes')

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Lynda Tabuya, you have the floor.

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- Thank you Mr. Chairman. Under SEG 1-Activity 2, there is an allocation for Mining Appeals Board. Now this Board was allocated \$32,000 in last year's budget, and of course the Mining Appeals Board is entrenched in the Mining Act or maybe the Quarries Act too, but when can Parliament get an update on their work and the number of appeals they have looked into and their resolutions, Honourable Minister.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Through you Mr. Chairman, what the Honourable Member is asking about is the nitty-gritties of the process of the Appeals Board, those things are not in the Budget submissions. Those are independent bodies itself, but if you do wish to have those you can always approach the Ministry. What I can tell you is that the allocation there is very few appeals and that is why the allocation itself is just sufficient for that.

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- Thank you Mr. Chairman, SEG 7 – Review of the Mining Act. Can the Minister clarify on this issue?

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Your question is on the review of the Mining Act, the processes?

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- Yes.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Thank you Mr. Chairman, in response to the Honourable Member, it is an ongoing process, we have looked at the draft or the amendment a few times. I think this is the seventh or eighth draft that we have sent to the Solicitor-General's Office, and we are in constant contact with them in the review process. What needs to be understood is that laws around mines is not a simple law, we have to look at the actual practicality as well on the ground and come up with the actual legislation together with the regulation that will cover all the areas. It is a very involved process and that is why it is taking some time and expenses.

HON. RO F. TUISAWAU.- Thank you Mr. Chairman, this is a very critical issue for indigenous people, the landowners. The reason why we are asking is that the consultation process, does it go to the *mataqali* which is the landowning unit under which the land minerals can be found, the *yavusa* and to the *bose vanua*. That is what we are asking here regarding this consultation process and regarding the change of law which might affect them. I know that you have reviewed the royalty, but there are some like in PNG and other parts of the developing world who are looking at ownership of minerals which are found under your land to be partly owned or owned by those who owned the land. So, that is something which we need to be clarified that the key stakeholders, the landowners, are also part of this consultative process. Thank you.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Thank you Mr. Chairman, I think the Honourable Member's question is not direct because this law here it does not really involve the question of royalties or the landowners rights. Those issues are contained in the Fair Share of Royalties for Minerals that was passed sometimes last year, and also those provisions that contained the State Lands Act and the Lands Sales Act and Transfer et cetera. These ones here, the Mining Law that we are talking about it basically deals with the mining process itself. The ways the licence are issues, the processes that are followed in terms of safety concerns, the type of mining et cetera, it does not deal with issues that the Honourable Member is raising; it is for another area of law.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Members, I give the floor to Honourable Bulitavu to move your motion on Head 33, Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 7. You have the floor.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you Mr. Chairman Sir, I move that Head 33, Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 7, on Environmental Monitoring of Mines and Quarries to be increased by \$200,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Is there a seconder?

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- Mr. Chairman Sir, I second the motion.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you Mr. Chairman Sir. This is a very important task that should be performed by the Ministry in terms of monitoring mines and quarries. I think this issue has come up many times and given the increased number of prospecting licence and mining licence that has been given, the increase of foreign companies that are incoming into this industry and participating in this industry, and the lack of landowners participation in consultation and the mining plans that should come with it, and agreeing to what they are going to go through especially, the effects on the environment and the Environment and Park Assessment. We have seen the case in Nawailevu, and also in Dreketi and even in other areas. In Namosi recently, where there has been issues raised by landowners, their fear in terms of preserving the environment. The role that the Ministry plays is very important coming into an agreement where both landowners and the investor they come into a "win-win" situation..

This is very important because it will foster a good relationship between landowners who sit on the resources, although the State owns the minerals per Section 30 of the 2013 Constitution, but again those

access and the agreement that needs to be planned out properly and how the partnership between the landowners, also these mining companies and the benefits that should come where landowners are able to find employment in mining companies and also in quarries. The various models that the Ministry should look into on how landowners should benefit in terms of community development and community participation of these mining companies, on how it should be reflected on the livelihood and the economic development and social status of the landowners.

I think given that the issues that have come up on the various chemicals that have found themselves into rivers and also affecting nature and the food source for landowners and their *qoliqoli*, I think there needs to be proper assessment on how these plans and licenses are issued that they do not affect the environment and they work within the boundary that is listed in the mining lease, and also the various compliance that they need to adhere to. I think this is very important, once we are able to monitor both quarry and mining, we know the need for development and the need for gravel extraction, sand extraction and soil extraction, it should not affect our environment; given the FijiFirst champions climate change and other environmental safeguards that should be there to protect our environment, that we do not end up in situations where we came up with the recent Malolo Island case and other cases that have come up.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Stick to the motion.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- These are issues where it all comes down to this particular area on how we monitor it, and they do not come up later that affects the relationship between the Government and the landowners. *Vinaka vakalevu.*

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Once again Honourable Bilitavu's motion is all over the place. It is what we call meandering or using Honourable Usamate's words is absolutely 'bollocks.' It is not what this is about. It is not about plucking a figure from thin air and say that we need an increment on this. If he has done calculation he would know, if you listen to me you would probably get there, it is not about plucking figures from the air. What we do when we make our budget submission and when we get a budget, we actually do the whole year's assessment. We do how many inspections we have done, how many mines are operating, we just do not ask for a figure just to look good.

We have done our assessment, we have the number of mines, as you were talking about the actual activities that we are monitoring here is Naibulu East, Dreketi, Macuata, Vatukoula, Naibulu Mine, Line One Limited and we have Sawakasa, Tailevu, Amax Mines, Mount Kasi, Namosi Joint Venture (NJV) and Magma Mines. All this is combined here under this Head, and we have done constant reviews and constant inspections of the sites and we have come up with the actual figure. In fact, we have an increment of \$20,000 from the previous allocation so it shows that whatever is needed is already there. It is not a question of just putting an amount on the paper. It is sufficient for these purposes and it is nothing to do with the river gravel extraction that is the separate category altogether.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Naiqama Lalabalavu, you have the floor.

HON. RATU N. LALABALAVU.- Thank you Mr. Chairman, just some comments on both items on SEG 7, and perhaps just to enlighten the Honourable Minister once more on the question that was raised by Honourable Ro Filipe, for this special motion, the only thing that we are raising is the surface rights. We understand that 90 percent of all the land is owned by Native Fijians and it is the surface rights that we are interested in on the review and on the environmental monitoring which is now part of SEG 7.

The other aspect of what we are trying to raise here is the restitution aspect of the mining lease. When mining is completed, you understand there is always that mining restitution clause within a mining lease.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Rehabilitation, you mean?

HON. RATU N.T. LALABALAVU.- Yes, that is the particular aspect, I am supporting this motion on the environmental issue and especially, when it is to do with the review on the surface rights. Thank you.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Mr. Chairman, again, that has nothing to do with this current review. That is already in the law, there is already a term of the licence. When a mining company is given a licence, we do take a deposit from them as well and there are specific provisions in the licence which talks of rehabilitation. So once they leave the area, they go and rehabilitate it. That portion is not under review in this Act, it is already there.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will take a vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	21
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	3

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will now suspend proceedings for refreshment in the Big Committee Room. Parliament will resume in half-an-hour where we will move to Programme 3 – Land Management, Activity 1 – State Land Administration. Honourable Niko Nawaikula, you will take the floor first. Parliament is adjourned.

The Parliament adjourned at 4.37 p.m.

The Parliament resumed at 5.12 p.m.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, this session is called to order and we are on Programme 3 (Land Management), Activity 1. I give the floor to Honourable Niko Nawaikula for his motion on Head 33-3-1(7). You have the floor, Sir.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Mr. Chairman, I move a motion, to increase Head 33 by \$1 million in relation to Programme 3-1(7), in relation to the Lease Arrears Taskforce.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Is there a seconder?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Honourable Chairman, I second the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Nawaikula, you have the floor.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Mr. Chairman, I wish the other side to know that when we do this, we are helping the Government or especially the Minister responsible in this motion. We look at the documents and the documents tell us that they are not doing their work or not achieving their target, and they need empowerment. So, we move these motions to add figure to their Ministry so that they can do their work. That is the basic purpose also for this motion.

(Honourable Member interjected)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- No, I am moving a motion.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBER.- Move your motion!

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Well, I am moving it now. As you can see the Lease Arrears Taskforce - \$150,000. If you look back to the previous year's Budget, this amount is always there and you ask, why? It implies that the Honourable Minister responsible is not doing his work.

(Honourable Member interjected)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order, order!

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- This is not my opinion. This is according to the auditor. I will quote to you what the auditor said. The latest audit on the Ministry of Lands says in relation to this, "The audit noted that the Ministry has substantial arrears of revenue amounting to \$21.8 million." That is a lot of money. That money can even finance one whole Ministry. The Ministry of Forests allocation was only \$16.5 million, and here is \$21.8 million just sitting there, just waiting for you to go and take it, but you are not doing it.

(Honourable Member interjected)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order, order!

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- I will quote again, and this is as at 31st July, 2017, "In the past five years, arrears of revenue has remained above \$20 million." So we ask whoever has been the Minister for Lands in the last five years and this money has been there - \$20 million, all but doing nothing.

Even worse, and I quote again, "It was noted that 18 percent of the debtors totalling \$3.9 million were more than five years old." And as you know if they are over six years old, there is a limitation period

where they cannot be recovered. So that is basically the purpose of this. We want to put more money to help the Honourable Minister for Lands in his work because we feel the allocation year after year, after year, is not doing anything and this is to empower him, to give him \$1 million more so that he can collect all those arrears.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, I give the floor to the Minister. You have the floor.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Thank you, Honourable Chairman. I thank the Honourable Nawaikula for his question.

Honourable Chairman, Honourable Nawaikula has never been the Minister for Lands, so he would not know the processes involved. I think it would serve him better if he can talk to the gentleman on his right, the Honourable Lalabalavu, who was a former Minister for Lands.

Land Arrears Collection does not mean that the Minister gets on a motorcycle or on Honourable Radrodro's horseback and goes and collects rent, it does not operate like that. There are different mechanisms to collect arrears. If Honourable Nawaikula listens to me, he will probably learn something today too.

There are many reasons why leases are not paid. Sometimes, there is a family dispute, the matter goes to court, no one is responsible for rent payments so the land lies there idle. There is no deductions by FSC, there is no deduction elsewhere, and the trustee is dead or has migrated, so they do not pay rent. No matter how many trips you make to their place, it does not solve the problem, so there is no need to increase the allocation by million dollars just to make a trip, for example, to the Western Division to talk to the people and come back.

(Honourable Member interjected)

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Yes, and Honourable Radrodro's proverbial horse that he was trying to get booked by LTA the other day. What we are doing, Honourable Chairman, we are making the system more efficient.

(Honourable Member interjected)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order, order!

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- See, he is not listening. If he listens to me, probably you will not ask this kind of senseless questions. What we are doing is, we are actually revitalising the whole system. If a lease has been in arrears, we will find the basic reason for it. If it is not being renewed because of a court battle or because of a family dispute, we get the families together, we give the lease to one of the trustees so as to provide for the payment of the leases in a timely manner, which then reduces the arrears. That is one method.

The second method is if there are houses built in a lease and the renewal is not happening because there is a breach of the lease condition, we try to regularise those, cut the parts out that have been in breach, the other part is advertised and tendered and given to some other people. They come in and they start paying the rental.

There are other methods of collecting rental and the Ministry has become very efficient in that, not just because of me, but because of the previous Ministers; the Honourable Vuniwaqa and Honourable Koya. They have streamlined the system to get the arrears in order, which then warranted a reduction from

the previous allocation of \$200,000 to now \$150,000, because now there is less work needed to go physically contacting those lessees to pay out because we can now control the system at Headquarters.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will now vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	23
Noes	:	26
Not voted	:	2

Motion is defeated.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- I need clarification on Activity 1, SEG 4 - Reversion of Government Lands Schedule A and B. What is the status of that reversion? How many Schedule A and B are here in Fiji? How many have been returned, reverted by SDL Government, and how many returned by FijiFirst Government? How many is left there with the Ministry of Lands?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- We are on Programme 3.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- He is lost, Mr. Chairman. I think we have moved on from that section.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- I just need a clarification on SEG 4, Sir?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor to move your motion.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- No, no, I am still on Activity 1, SEG 4. We have just finished with the motion by Honourable Nawaikula, but I need some clarification on SEG 4. I have some more motions on later activities.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- There is one Honourable Mitieli Bulanauca here to move that Head 33 be increased in Programme 3, Activity 1, SEG 4 with respect to the Reversion of Government Lands Schedule A and B.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- Yes, Sir.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Move your motion.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- Thank you, Sir. I was a bit confused, sorry about that, Sir. SEG 4 is about reversion, if you can increase that to \$600,000 by \$300,000 so that it can quicken up the process by which they revert the Schedules A and B to whoever the landowners are.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Is there a seconder?

HON. RATU T.N. NAVURELEVU.- I second the motion, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Bulanauca, you have the floor.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- Thank you, Chairman, Sir. First, we will need to know the status of these Schedule A and B here in Fiji. How many actually are there? How many have been reverted by previous governments, SDL, and also by this Government which we will appreciate and how many are still left to be completed? This seems too slow for me and that is why I am proposing an additional \$300,000

so that it can quicken up the reversion of these Schedule A and B land to whoever is supposed to own them. Thank you, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you, Honourable Minister.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Thank you, Honourable Chair. As I said earlier, it is not that simple when you talk about reversion of Government Lands Schedule A and B. The Honourable Member would realise that when this policy was first made, there was a Cabinet Decision which was to revert the Schedule A and B to iTaukei Lands Trust Board (iTLTB).

The details that he is asking for, I do not have it here but he can always get that from the office. But what is pertinent to note that the actual reversion, why is it taking time. It is still under our control and why it is taking time is because when this decision was made, the actual sitting occupants were not considered at that time. So we have cases particularly, I have visited a place in the Northern Division in the Nagigi area where a particular house, of the four bedrooms, two bedrooms sit on iTaukei land and two bedrooms sit on State land. So the actual surveying, the actual movement, the collection of rent is a joint operation between both the iTLTB and the State Lands Department to get to the field to survey these places and to see the boundaries because the boundaries on the ground does not actually represent what is on the plans and vice versa. What you might have on the plan is not what is on the ground. So this is a tedious task and is proceeding, and from my last record, and I stand to be corrected, about 30 percent of that Schedule A and B has been transferred. Thank you Honourable Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	22
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	2

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, Activity 2 – Surveys?

(Chorus of ‘Noes’)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Activity 3?

(Chorus of ‘Noes’)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Sorry, I beg your pardon. Activity 2, there is a motion by the Honourable Mitieli Bulanauca. You have the floor.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. My motion is to increase the allocation on Survey of Mahogany Plantations, it is \$512,486 now; double it.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBER.- SEG?

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- SEG 8 – Survey of Mahogany Plantations - \$512,486.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Is there a seconder?

HON. RATU T. NAVURELEVU.- I second the motion, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Bulanauca, you have the floor.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. The rate of replanting is very slow in relation to the areas that have been surveyed. We need a quick survey of these *mataqali* lands, particularly in Nukurua, Naboutini and Galoa, where the operations are in current process to avoid a lot of disputes and also to ensure correct allocation of benefits of whatever activities is going on in there. We need to double the money, to double up all efforts, double up all the trainings and double up all the production and performance that you need to have from there. Thank you, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Minister, you have floor.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Thank you Honourable Chairman. With your permission, I will respond to the issue raised by the Honourable Member.

The most pertinent point to note here, Honourable Chairman, is that just by increasing an allocation under a particular SEG does not mean that more work will be done on the ground. It is pertinent to note that the surveying of mahogany plantations on iTaukei land is an ongoing process. So when it all started, there was a higher amount given and one of those has already been surveyed and that is in Galoa (Honourable Leawere will very well know about that), and other plantations. There is work already being carried out on two plantations. So it is an ongoing process, and my submission is that the budget allocated is sufficient to carry on, because there is no point in getting a whole sum today and will not be able to do any survey for the rest of the year.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Leawere, you have the floor.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Thank you Mr. Chairman. The comments made by the Honourable Minister in terms of the surveying of mahogany plantation, will that impact on the sawmills that are close there in Waivunu and Navutu? Will that impact on your survey?

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- It is a totally different area and it is a different line of questioning.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	22
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	2

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, Activity 3?

(Chorus of `Ayes` and `Noes`)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Mitieli Bulanauca, you have the floor to move your motion.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- My motion Mr. Chairman, Sir, is on SEG 5 – Books, Periodicals and Publications \$1,000, to increase to \$4,000.

(Laughter)

That is my motion, Sir.

HON. RATU T. NAVURELEVU.- I second the motion, Honourable Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor, Honourable Bulanauca.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- Yes, Mr. Chairman, Sir. It is just a small one but it is very important that we have proper publication on values here in Fiji. It is the responsibility of the Government to publicise that for the information of the public on the various increases in values. It is important that the public knows of the averages or the representative values of various types of users, various types of localities in Fiji. To be aware of the values before they buy or sell, because a lot had been hoodwinked or conned by paying too much or too less. This is because they are not being informed and not being educated of the values in Fiji.

Every information is in the Valuation Section in the Lands Department, they only have to publicise it every month or every 3 months for the information of the public. It is the responsibility of the Government to educate the public of what the representative values should be and they should be aware of how much they can sell for and buy at. That is my motion, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Thank you Honourable Chairman. I think the Honourable Member is again mistaken. These periodicals the Ministry publishes for the benefit of and to educate the people. This is something the Ministry purchases for its own sections. For example, if there is say a magazine on gold or magazine on minerals published in Australia, it is to purchase to educate our own staff to see how they deal with the situation on the ground here. It is not something that we publish and sell.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- We will vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	22
Noes	:	26
Not Voted	:	3

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, Activity 4?

(Chorus of `Noes`)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Activity 5?

(Chorus of `Ayes` and `Noes`)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Bulitavu, you have the floor.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Just a clarification from the Honourable Minister on SEG 10 - Development of iTaukei Land – Land Use, given that it is reduced from \$2 million to \$1.5 million. Why is that the case?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Thank you Honourable Chairman, I think it needs a bit of an explanation. It is almost like if you build a house in a 3-year period, you just do not get the money for the entire programme, the entire building in that one year, you do the foundation, you do the walls. In the second year, you do the roof, it is progressive. And then you paint in the following year. They are distributed in different areas, that is what is actually happening. There are two main ones which I will let you know about, the one in Yako, and the one in Sabeto, which the landowning units approached the Government, gave their land to the Land Bank and we are using at our expense to subdivide this land, do the engineering, culverts, and I have inspected both of these sites myself. A lot of work has already been done so that portion has been taken out from the allocation. Now the remainder of that money will be used for the next stage. When it comes to the actual selling of those properties, as the money comes in, it goes to the landowners for their benefit. It is actually a very good project for the landowning units and you should go back to your community, in your area, and tell them that it is a very good project.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Still on SEG 10, my next question, how many parcels of *iTaukei* land have so far been deposited to this Land Bank by the landowning units?

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- This question is not exactly on Land Bank. I do not have the records on how many lands have been deposited but the ones that are currently being developed, there are two of them, one in Yako and one in Sabeto from my records.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you, I give the floor to the Honourable Mitieli Bulanauca to move his motion.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- Mr. Chairman, Sir, I move a motion to increase the allocation on SEG 4 – Land Buy Back Administration which has been allocated \$5,000, to increase by \$495,000.

HON. RATU T. NAVURELEVU.- Mr. Chairman, I second the motion.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is important that we increase this allocation to \$500,000. It is important that we accommodate the wishes of the landowners for the buyback of their land. It is important particularly that the budget allocation at the moment is \$5,000, has been reduced from \$7,000 and just purely for administration, I think, but we need to actually have allocation for buyback. You cannot buy any freehold land for \$7,000 or \$5,000, that is purely for administration, but for \$500,000, you can at least buy two or three a year.

Previous governments have been allocating \$500,000 for this particular allocation itself. That is why I am proposing it to \$500,000 to be able to accommodate the wishes of the landowners and also to fulfil the need of the freehold landowners who wish to sell their land, so you are accommodating both areas. That is my motion, Sir.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the Honourable Member because he stands up when he speaks, he does not really read the thing in full. It is Land Buy Back Administration, it is not the money that is used to buy that land. It is for things like this - paper, pen, calculators, et cetera. What it actually means is that, Mr. Chairman, the provision is for the works carried out on a day-to-day basis, like travelling for inspection, meeting, et cetera, and because part of that land has already been dealt with, you do not need to travel ten, twenty times. This is not the money to actually buy the land. The Honourable Member would do well if he reads the entire thing probably he will save a lot of time of this House and we can finish the whole Budget much earlier.

(Honourable Members interject)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	21
Noes	:	27
Not voted	:	3

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Activity 6, Honourable Leawere, you have the floor.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, just a clarification on SEG 5 on the Training Expenses. I see that it appears in Programme 2, Activity 1; Programme 3-1, Programme 3-3 and then Programme 3-5, and this Training Expenses has an allocation of \$4,000. Does that also accommodate those who are to go on further training, like may be In-Service? Does that also impact on this Training Programme because I see that the amount is quite minimal? Where in that SEG will accommodate In-Service Training for the staff in the Ministry of Lands? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank the Honourable Member for his question. For his benefit, he noticed that there are other Training Expenses in other sections as well. It is not about just training all the Lands and Minerals Resources Department staff under one Head. The Mineral Resources have different training; Lands have different training. It is almost like there are separate allocation of goalkeeper training, separate from midfielder training, separate from striker training. We just do not put the whole team in one training. That amount there is sufficient and it provides for the staff capacity-building and training needs and the prioritised areas. That purpose is for that Division-Divisional Lands Office Central/ Eastern. The other one will be for Lautoka and the third one will be for the Northern Division, in case someone wants to ask that extra question.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Programme 3-7?

(Chorus of `Ayes` and `Noes`)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Kuridrani, you have the floor.

HON. I. KURIDRANI.- Mr. Chairman, there was an allocation of \$55,000 for SEG 7 in the last year's Budget, but this year is no more allocation in the Budget. Can the Honourable Minister confirm the absence of this allocation - SEG 7.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- There is no SEG 7.

HON. I. KURIDRANI.- It means that they have already completed all the backlog?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Member, there is no SEG 7 here. In this Programme 3-7, there is no SEG 7.

HON. I. KURIDRANI.- Mr. Chairman, in SEG 7 last year, there was an allocation of \$55,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- We are not talking about last year, we are talking about this year.

HON. I. KURIDRANI.- And this year, it is zero, no more allocation regarding the lease backlog administration.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Member, you have to talk about the Estimates this year.

HON. I. KURIDRANI.- All right.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- What is on last year's Estimate is irrelevant to us.

HON. I. KURIDRANI.- All right, Mr. Chairman, I thought I was giving a comparison. Anyway, in this year's allocation for lease backlog administration cost, there is no allocation. Can the Honourable Minister confirm that all these lease backlog had been cleared?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You cannot talk about it, it is not in here, there is no SEG 7. That was last year, and it had been removed. Honourable Members, we will move on. Programme 3-8?

(Chorus of 'Noes')

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, Parliament will now vote on Head 33, that the amount for Head 33 - Ministry of Lands and Mineral Resources, be approved.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of 'Ayes' and 'Noes')

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	27
Noes	:	22
Not Voted	:	2

Head 33 agreed to.

Head 34 - Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism:

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Programme 2, Activity 1.

(Chorus of 'Ayes' and 'Noes')

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Mr. Chair, can I just ask the Honourable Minister why we are not getting any Annual Reports on the Consumer Council of Fiji and Film Fiji?

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Are we going to get Annual Reports from these two bodies? Can the Honourable Minister, please, reply?

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Please, cool down, I am asking the Honourable Minister.

(Honourable Members interject)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, he only wants an answer from you and not from anyone else.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Absolutely, thank you, Mr. Chair.

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- Mr. Chair, Sir, I think the Honourable Member cannot remember there were Committee meetings here previously when I used to come and present all my reports - all my reports are in order. When I say “all my reports”, I am making reference to the Consumer Council of Fiji where I used to work before. Those reports are in order. Regarding Film Fiji, they are yet to complete their reports.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just on Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG 10 – Special Economic Zone, there is a reduction of about \$8.5 million. Only \$500,000 has been allocated for Special Economic Zone. Can we get a clarification whether the allocation reduction means that the Special Economic Zone Development has been completed or half-way into completion or what is the status now?

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- Mr. Chair, initially, this particular programme, Special Economic Zone, was meant to be developed at Wairabetia. That was the site identified and the Budget was allocated for that site, so we all understand that if you put \$10 million for a particular site, it cannot happen in that particular year. It requires EIA, it requires planning, engineering plans, consultancy, and then you actually give it out to a particular company to develop the site. In this case, the initial scoping exercise was done and from the scoping exercise, that is the pre-feasibility study, it was revealed that that site can be very costly. For that reason, we have changed the site to Navutu. There will be low development cost.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- Navutu in where?

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- Navutu in Lautoka, we are doing this particular project now with FNPF. My Ministry has signed the MOU with FNPF. It is a good project in the sense that once the site is developed for the Special Economic Zone, our members will also benefit.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Members, I give the floor to the Honourable Lynda Tabuya to move her motion on Head 34, Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG 6. You have the floor.

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that Head 34, Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG 6 be decreased by \$500,000, in respect of the Consumer Council of Fiji.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBER.- Why?

HON. I. KURIDRANI.- I second the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor, Honourable Tabuya.

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- Thank you, Mr. Chair. Firstly, I just want to support the Honourable Gavoka’s query about the Honourable Minister’s role, yes, at the Consumer Council regarding her Annual Reports of 2017 and 2018, which are not available. I would like her to clarify that, I mean it is important about accounting back to this Parliament and the Committees about the Annual Reports.

Furthermore, Mr. Chair, there is a concern about the duplication of roles now between the Consumer Council and the Fijian Competition and Consumer Commission (FCCC).

(Honourable Members interjected)

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- Yes, they are different organisations, but Mr. Chair, according to the Consumer Council of Fiji Act

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBER.- A lawyer! That is the quality of lawyers, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order! Order!

MS. L.D. TABUYA.- ...and the Fijian Competition Commission Act their roles are exactly the same, they promote and protect the rights and interests of consumers and promoting fair and just delivery. Now, as the Honourable Minister knows they appoint the Board Members of Consumer Council of Fiji. As I said the duplication of their roles really does not warrant that both organisations exists and continue to receive the kind of funding they do because they are duplicating roles. So, that is why I am moving this motion to reduce the budget and allocation for the Consumer Council of Fiji, thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- Mr. Chair, Sir, let me state something very clear here. The first thing I want to say is previously Honourable Tabuya used to champion consumer rights as well. Today, she has come back saying we should reduce the funding. In this country, there was no consumer rights. Consumer Rights were unknown. It only became known from 2006 onwards.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBERS. Hear, hear!

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- Let me tell you there is a huge difference between Consumer Council of Fiji and FCCC. I thought you would have read the law very clearly, but unfortunately, you have not.

Consumer Council of Fiji is an institution established through UN guidelines, which makes it mandatory for all countries to set up an organisation like Consumer Council of Fiji, that really protects the rights and interests of consumers. In other words, any consumer can approach that institution and say well, these are the issues that is affecting and therefore if you can put it across for policy changes. I can give you several examples of what Consumer Council has done for the people of this country. The first one is the third party policy. That policy was changed and therefore Accident Compensation Commission came into place. This was one of the programmes that started off with Consumer Council, and then a number of examples of that nature. But let's come to the FCCC.

HON. MEMBER.- Teach them.

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- FCCC is an enforcement body, they are the enforcement body whereas Consumer Council of Fiji is an advocacy body. That is the main difference. FCCC is an enforcement body, it is also dealing with competition whereas Consumer Council does not. It is simply an advocacy body which promotes the rights and responsibilities of consumers in this country. That is what they do.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Tabuya, you have the floor.

HON. L. TABUYA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I did not really expect the former CEO of Consumer Council would advocate for me, but there it is. Really, just you know, remind the Honourable Minister that yes, I have read the law and like she had confirmed the Consumer Council of Fiji receives complaints from consumers and so this FCCC. Those are the core functions under Section 15(1)(h), to receive and consider complaints concerning matters of the consumers. So, there is a duplication of role, and that is the only reason the reduction of the Budget so that perhaps it will go to the FCCC which is a bit more visible these days. The FCCC is advocating and also doing this consultations on the increase in the electricity tariff which the Consumer Council is not doing. So, who is playing that role now? The FCCC is more visible. So, perhaps the allocation should go there rather than to Consumer Council, thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- Mr Chairman, I simply do not understand why the Honourable Member is only talking about complaints. There are certain complaints which as generalised, in other words it does not affect one person, but many. And in that situation, you cannot take it to FCCC because they deal with individual complaints and therefore they will take it to court. Whereas when it comes to Consumer Council, generalised complaints come to Consumer Council because it is an issue affecting many, and that is where policy changes are required. That is the main difference when it comes to complaints handling, receiving complaints, the role of FCCC and the role of Consumer Council. This is in relation to complaints, and that is why I said initially, it is an advocacy organisation and the other one is an enforcement agency. It is also a regulatory institution, you know they regulate products and services, so that is where the difference is.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will now vote on Head 34, Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG 6.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	20
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	4

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, I give the floor to the Honourable Lynda Tabuya.

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- Thank you Mr. Chair. I move a motion that Head 34, Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG 6, be decreased by \$750,000, in respect of Investment Fiji.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- I second the motion.

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- Honourable Chair, under this SEG for Investment Fiji, last year this body was allocated \$2.6 million. It is a really important organisation as a gateway to investments in Fiji. Once again, annual reports have not been tabled since 2016. This is a serious issue, and we have seen this across the board in terms of organisations that should be accountable to this August House, not filing annual reports.

Now the Board must be held accountable. Now that the CEO has left, who has replaced him, or do we have a Chair that is also the CEO? I would like to get some guidance from the Honourable Minister about this, but the issue of non-accountability, Honourable Chair, is something that we really need to take seriously in terms of public funds that are paid for these operations. It is a good governance issue, and so until that is submitted and up to date in this House in terms of annual reports, we should not be getting the same kind of investment because we need to get accountability. And until that is fulfilled then the funds be released. This Government needs to take that seriously in terms of accounting back to the House. It is three years now, but this needs to be done. Thank you Mr. Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor, Honourable Minister.

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- Mr. Chairman, Sir, I acknowledge what she has said and definitely, as the new Minister for this particular ministry, I will be working on all annual reports.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBER.- Hear, hear!

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- The point being, however, is that it does not mean, Mr. Chairman, Sir, you stop the funds for such an important organisation. I mean in fact, Mr. Chairman, Sir, a lot of the

organisations and in fact, ministries have been playing catch-up because prior to 2006, many of the annual reports were not filed.

(Honourable Members interjected)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- No, it is a fact! Look! I admit I said yesterday when Honourable Litia Qionibaravi; just hear me out.

(Honourable Member interjects)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Honourable Litia Qionibaravi raised the point about annual reports not being tabled, I said yes, and we are just as much perturbed about that as you are. In fact probably more so, you are probably doing it for gimmickry, we are not. But the point of the matter is that there are many organisations, many ministries where they have actually had to play catch-up. So in fact, going back, if you look at Parliament in 2014, if you look at some of the organisations and ministries, we were filing annual reports from 2003, 2002. We had to play catch-up with that. We did do that. Some of course are within the domain of this Government's term that needs to be done. But, please be cognizant of the fact that it had happened in the past. We are trying to play catch-up and we will ensure it does happen because we are equally concerned and like I said yesterday, let us name and shame these organisations but for budgetary purposes, it does not mean therefore, you completely cut out their budget.

Investment Fiji does play a pivotal role. Like other organisations, they need to continue and you do have the Auditor-General's report, remember that. You do get the Auditor-General's report.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor.

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- Thank you, Honourable Chair. Look, this is the same tune we are hearing from the other side of the House about everything happened after 2006.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBER.- Not everything!

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- They are trying to erase history. You know, Honourable Minister, thank you for your commitment to producing those annual reports, very gracious of you.

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- I think we are all committed.

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- The fact that she mentioned before that the consumer rights advocacy happened after 2006 is actually incorrect, because the Consumer Council of Fiji was established in 1976 and they have been advocating since 1976 to 2006. So you know, let us really give the credit where it is due, that it did not begin from 2006. And the same for the Honourable Attorney-General, you know this has been happening over time. Let us not forget history. Honourable Chair, the reason for this motion is really if we want to get accountability, one of the tenets of democracy – good governance is to ensure....

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- And when they talk about the past.

(Honourable Members interject)

I am not done, I have 20 minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order!

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- They are talking about the past when really they have been there for over a decade, almost 13 years now. So, really when you say previous years, that is not before 2006, that is before this year. So let us put that in perspective and let us gain more accountability from our institutions that we give public funds to; that is paramount. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister.

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- Thank you, Chair, Sir. This is the level of hypocrisy. I just hope the sentiment expressed by the Honourable Member is hers only because I have been attending the Parliamentary Sub-Committee meetings and every meeting, and we were given accolades for the job well done. Even in this Parliament from 2014, these sentiments were expressed as well.

Now, going back to what Consumer Council of Fiji was before 2006, people did not know their rights. Organisations can be there but that organisation was not effective. That organisation started with a budget of barely \$400,000 and today, you look at the budget of this institution. That is one institution that had the guts to challenge the banks. They did the banking report, they did the insurance report, they did the hire purchase report. They have done a number of work in that area, and you cannot take that away because it is just there. And all these were done by this Government, 2006 onwards. And probably, you were out of the country when all these things happened.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will now vote on this.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	22
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	2

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Programme 3-1?

(Chorus of 'Noes')

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Programme 4-1?

(Chorus of 'Noes')

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Programme 4-2, I give the floor to the Honourable Ro Filipe Tuisawau to move his motion. You have the floor, Sir.

HON. RO F. TUISAWAU.- Thank you, Honourable Chairman. I move the motion, Head 34-4-2(5) to increase Training Expenses by \$90,000 to \$100,000.

HON. I. KURIDRANI.- I second the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor, Honourable Tuisawau.

HON. RO F. TUISAWAU.- Thank you, Honourable Chairman. I am assuming this is training relating to co-operatives and not the internal staff, but if it is for internal staff, I am proposing that it still be increased and then shifted to the appropriate SEG.

I commend the Ministry regarding the work on cooperatives so far. It is a critical aspect of the Ministry of Trade and Industry. The reason why I am pushing for this is that, cooperatives blend in well with the socio-economic structure of the indigenous in terms of the *vanua* level where *mataqalis* they can organise according to the existing social structure using the strengths of those social structures at community level, where they can utilise their community connections, families, et cetera, to establish commercial-basis operations. There are some good models which are happening in Naitasiri and a few other areas.

I believe this is an area where we can expand indigenous businesses using the social strengths that already exist within the *vanua*, utilising the traditional structures or *mataqali* structures and then, I suppose, adopting that into the business world, which is why I am requesting or pushing for this particular SEG of the Ministry to be strengthened.

I know that you will not approve it, we will be outvoted, but I am raising it and Honourable Minister if that could be considered. I believe in moving the nation forward, we move in equity, not only in terms of individual basis, but also equity in terms of the communities or the various ethnic groups. That is the basis of that. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- Mr. Chairman, Sir, cooperatives, there is a component called training and the other one is Extension Programme. The training expense you are mentioning here is part of the training that is provided at the Cooperatives Training School, which is based in Lami. The expense we are talking about is simply buying of training materials, that is all. When it comes to training, we provide training to everyone, whether you are indigenous, non-indigenous, you live in rural, urban, whoever needs it, we provide training, and I think that is how we should do it.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- We will now vote on Activity 2(5).

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	21
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	3

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Activity 3, Honourable Mitieli Bulanauca you have a motion. You have the floor, Sir.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- I move that...

HON. MEMBERS.- Yes.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- ... the allocation in Activity 3, SEGs 1 to 5, SEGs 7 to 9 and 13, by \$200,000. I will explain, Mr. Chairman, Sir. Programme 4-3.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBERS.- What SEG?

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- SEGs 1 to 5. I will explain, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Member, you do it a SEG at a time if you want to do that, not just take the whole lot like a jumble sale.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- Sir, it is a holistic motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- If you want to do it, do it on each SEG. I rule this motion out of order.

Honourable Members, Programme 5-1.

(Chorus of `Ayes` and `Noes`)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Viliame Gavoka, you have the floor.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Mr. Chairman, can I just ask the Honourable Minister, in SEG 7, there is Tourism Research and Survey Expenses, would this include the International Visitor Survey (IVS)?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor, Honourable Minister.

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- My answer is, yes.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Sorry?

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- You asked me if it is IVS, I said, `yes`.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Is it included in this?

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- Yes.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- I am thankful for that Honourable Chairman, because at one time, the FijiFirst Government took this away earlier and brought it back, and we are happy with the provision for Tourism, because SVT was the first Government to increase the marketing budget for Tourism Fiji. So, we will support anything to do with tourism, Honourable Chairman. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN. – Thank you. Honourable Saukuru, you have the floor.

HON. J. SAUKURU.- Mr. Chairman, through you, I just need clarification from the Honourable Minister, from the allocations that you have here, is there any assistance for our local operators, and if you can identify that for me, please?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- Which SEG is that?

HON. J. SAUKURU.- I am seeking clarification from you, Honourable Minister, whether there is assistance for local operators like we have discussed, the local tourism operators.

MR CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- Mr. Chairman, Sir, yes, there is funds available under what we call the MSME, the CCA coordinating agency where we are coordinating all the micro, medium, small enterprises together under one body. So, from there we can provide assistance but besides that, even under tourism there is a section called Stakeholder Capacity Building. This is slightly different but we do assist local

operators to build their capacity, and we have just done that recently for Chef Training where a group of ladies from the Ra highland were trained. So, we provide that kind of training as well.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Ro Tuisawau, you have the floor.

HON. RO F. TUISAWAU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, SEG 6 – South Pacific Tourism Organisation - Rent, South Pacific Tourism Organisation - Membership Fee. There was a report two to three years back on a regional framework which recommended rationalisation of regional organisations, given the proliferation of regional organisations which had been developed - PIFS, SPREP, et cetera, and there was a concern, including SPTO. Are there some plans in moving forward to rationalise because as I had mentioned before, SOPAC was there but they have been absorbed into SPC and SPREP as a result of that report. But I believe part of the report was to incorporate SPTO into PIFS, which was part of the rationalisation in terms of efficiency and funding. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- Mr. Chairman, we are a national government and we are not Pacific institution to make that kind of decision. So, we will only be able to do once the decision is made at the regional level. Such discussion had started but it is not concluded yet, so currently this institution exists and we have an MOU in place and we are honouring that.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you, we will move on. Programme 6-1, General Administration. Honourable Bilitavu, you have the floor to move your motion.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir, I move, that Head 34-6-1(10) on the Young Entrepreneurship Scheme be increased by \$1 million.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Is there a seconder?

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- Mr. Chairman, I second the motion.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. This Programme started in last year's Budget and was set at about \$2 million, and has been reduced to \$500,000. I think there has been a lot of marketing by the FijiFirst Government. Part of it was their initiative.

Everywhere you go, whether you go to the cinemas or whether you see the billboards on the road, I think there is a good advertisement on the YES Programme to draw our young entrepreneurs, the 30 Under 30, and even those who want to participate or want to become entrepreneurs. They have the skills, the qualifications and the resources, but they just need the leg-up. To reduce, Mr. Chairman, is not a very good way forward and a good example for our young people.

I think we, especially the Government, should look into that. Given that they participate in the various industries that we have, the reduction is not welcomed by them. I urge the Government that we must increase this. I think the Honourable Minister will understand this, given that the trend should be increasing every year, and the reduction in this Budget is unacceptable to them. They represent a big number of our voting population too and \$1 million to increase this will help them this year, next year and the years to come. But again, given that they are looking forward for these opportunities and these opportunities will be created by the Government, there should an increase by \$1 million for this allocation. *Vinaka vakalevu.*

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Lynda Tabuya, you have the floor.

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In support of this motion, I would like to contribute regarding this YES Scheme. In the past year when it was introduced and the allocation of \$2 million, they were actually young people who went to inquire about this Scheme and were told that the Scheme was on hold because there was no funding. So now there is a reduction this year by \$1.5 million, that is from young people who have been in the programme might be happy to provide their information.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Do you have their names?

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- Yes. And also for the 30 Under 30, for those who need to start a business, they have the commitment also are also struggling to access the funds. This is really important that the commitment by the Government actually translates to stories or anecdotes from young people who have accessed this programme and are beginning their businesses and we would like to see that. The PR was just a lot of hype and there was a *Facebook* page and a website which was quite displayed. But we need some stories and all of that to show that because the young people have come to tell me that they have not been able to access because the funds were on hold. So I contribute to this motion for the increase that we do honour this commitment to our young people. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- Mr. Chairman, I think again Honourable Tabuya is trying to mislead the House. The 30 Under 30 has nothing to do with the YES Programme, it was about the achievements of all young people no matter what they do, we celebrated their achievements whether they were Radio Broadcaster, in the banking field, we did not fund that person through YES Programme. This is the confusion she is creating.

(Honourable Member interjects)

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- YES Programme initially, we needed the money because we wanted to promote the Programme which we have done. This particular Project is about innovation, it is not about starting a bakery, it is not about a tyre centre, it is not about opening a café, it is not about that; it is about innovation. What we have seen the utilisation is a little bit low, people are not taking this. The whole Programme is about innovation and it is run by the private sector. In other words, there is a Committee made up of private businesses and they are the ones who select the applications that come.

What we have done this year, we have created another Programme called RISE. Again it is to do with the businesses. Here we are trying to make it more flexible where they can apply to the Ministry for Research and Development (R&D). They can create new products rather than, probably innovation was something that they could not understand or they could not come up with an idea. So we have diverted the funds into this particular Programme as well called RISE, where they can come up with new products, it's called RISE. As you have said, we totally agree with you, Mr. Chairman, that youth contribute a lot to our economy. We must recognise that and it is for this reason, for the first time we will be having a consolidated celebration of youths and their achievements.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	22
Noes	:	26
Not Voted	:	3

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, I give the floor to the Honourable Bulitavu to move his motion under Head 34, Programme 6, Activity 1, SEG 10. You have the floor, Honourable Member.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Mr. Chair, Sir. I move that Head 34, Programme 6, Activity 1, SEG 10 on the Northern Development Programme (NDP) be increased by \$1 million.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Is there a seconder?

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- Mr. Chair, I second the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor, Honourable Bulitavu.

HON. M. D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Mr. Chair, Sir. I think the idea of the NDP, it started with the Look North Policy and how to develop the Northern Division especially the young entrepreneurs and the SMEs. There has been many developments done into relaxing various criteria to enable people to participate in the economic activities. The NDP has helped a lot in the Northern Division and many have become very successful business people and have developed not only from Small Micro-Enterprise but to medium enterprise level even some have gone to become exporters.

The idea is that the Northern Division has many untapped resources and many potential and the Government has brought in development in infrastructure and everything that is needed to allow access into the agriculture sector and other business sectors that will allow the Northern population to participate through this chain of business. But the reduction is not welcomed in the Northern Division, and I think there needs to be more money put into this. If the Government is really serious about the Look North Policy and the Northern Development Programme, I think the Honourable Minister for Defence and former Commissioner Northern can testify on the many successful stories and testimony that has come out from this NDP. But the trend to decrease it, I think it does not give a good example on the trend that we should be going and even your predecessor Mr. Faiyaz Koya in the past four years, even with the YES programme and the other SMEs programmes has been advocating the increase of these grants from day one. If you look back at the Budget trends from 2015 to the last Budget, it was on a gradual increase. It shows the demand that was coming from those applicants that come through.

I think there has been assurance that a proper review should have been done, review of those existing businesses and those that have died out and what needs to be done to them to continue, to incubate and all that. That is one of the reasons why I move this motion to an increase by \$1 million because it will help boost the Northern economy.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- Thank you, Mr. Chair, Sir. Let me just explain why this particular programme has in fact got more money now. If you look at Page 226 of the Budget Estimate and if you go to the Emoluments you will see there is a huge increase. Why? The reason being NDP Programme and IHRD Programme, all these programmes had Project Officers.

So when we were allocating funds previously under NDP suppose we gave \$1.5 million, it meant the whole operation, staff salaries were paid, administrative cost was there; everything was there. Now we are consolidating it through Central Coordinating Agency which means this money that we are showing here is what we will be using in the project. And besides that, the way we are trying to centralise the Micro-Small and Medium Enterprises under one roof, where all training will be provided in a central manner and incubators are there to assist them and many other activities that will be rolled out, definitely all these programmes will benefit. We are trying to set up this central coordinating agency, of course, you can see it in the Budget. There will be more money to do the work. These are just estimates but once we centralise everything, there will be more money to do this work.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Members, we will now vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	23
Noes	:	26
Not voted	:	2

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, I give the floor to the Honourable Bulitavu to move his motion.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that Head 34, Programme 6, Activity 1, SEG 10 with regards to Micro and Small Business Grant Scheme which sits at \$300,000 to be moved up by \$2 million.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Is there a seconder?

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- I second the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Bulitavu, you have the floor.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. I think this particular grant, last year sat around \$6.4 million and has now dropped to only \$300,000. Given the explanation by the Honourable Minister in the previous motion, the consolidation of expenses of those staff who were running this, but given that this particular grant has been a grant, I think we all witnessed in the last four years where people have applied and the demand have come in. It went through verifications through FDB and the Council that was set up later, and the incubation and monitoring of those businesses, how they were trained, and also the environment that they were in, another follow up that was given to them, and also how they penetrated into the various markets that they were venturing in.

A drop in this allocation is not a good signal. Whenever the Honourable Minister for Trade or the Honourable Prime Minister comes to a town in Vanua Levu or Viti Levu, with a \$1,000 grant, everyone will be crowded there. We all know that before elections, but I will not go into that. But the idea is where people on this side of the House have labelled it freebies, that side of the House you have labelled it leg-up or whatever name we call it. But again there is a big reduction. Whether we have leg down now or what we have done. If it is a leg-up, if you are providing a ladder for people to be accelerated into the commercial sector, then I think we should prioritise and put our money where your mouth is and this is one of it where we should be investing more.

Because once we invest into this, then they will be using the electricity, water, roading that we provide to bring in their goods and services that they will participate in and they will contribute in the economic spin in the area, which also helps the economy and also Government and in taxes and various fees and levies. But we should create that and more of that and how people are empowered with business skills and also the financial assistance, that they are able to make headways into the bank and get loans after they are assisted so that they develop from the various groupings; small business into medium and even to become big commercial exporters. But that is the trend that we want to see that our people develop into. I think I provided justifications on that and your predecessor, Madam Minister, always boasted about increasing this allocation. I think if FijiFirst should be true to its promises on what they have said to the people in the elections last year, I think this is the said allocation where you should have seen how you love the people.

(Honourable Members interject)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order!

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Listen! Listen!

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order! Order!

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- I think you have to answer to the people why this has been reduced.
Vinaka vakalevu.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order! Have you finished? Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- Mr. Chair, Sir, I request the Honourable Member to read a few lines above that, it also talks about Micro and Small Business Grant (MSBG) (\$1,000,000). Now let me explain about the MSBG, this particular grant was given by the Prime Minister of India when he visited Fiji, and as you know in India, Mr. Chairman, Sir, micro and small businesses lead the world, and that was his contribution to the country, to the people of Fiji, where he gave a grant and that was the money that was being given to the people in our country for them to start their businesses.

Now, we have \$1 million shown in the Budget Estimate. This is the last tranche that has been given by the Government of India. So what we are going to do is, there are about 3,600 or so applications which are pending, which means that we have to validate that. We have to go and check, see, coach them before this money is given, so that is validation, et cetera, and then this money will be given.

The other tranche that the Honourable Member is talking about, \$300,000 is exactly what you said towards the end part of your contribution to this discussion, where you said that we need to support the businesses so that they can graduate from micro to small. This is what this money will do now, so what we will do is we have been doing the monitoring of some of these businesses and we will identify those businesses, who can now graduate to the next level. If they need some assistance, we will assist them financially as well as link them with FDB. This is the second stage. It is a progression stage where we will be able to identify the recipients of MSBG for the last couple of years and then assist them further so that they can move up the ladder. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will now vote on this motion.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	22
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	4

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, Parliament will now vote on Head 34, that the amount of Head 34 – Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism, be approved.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of `Ayes` and `Noes`)

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	27
Noes	:	23
Not Voted	:	1

Head 34 is agreed to.

Head 35 – Ministry of Sugar Industry

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, the floor is now open for any comments on Programme 1, Activity 1. I give the floor to the Honourable Prasad to move his motion.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that Head 35 – Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 10, be increased by \$30 million to the levels contained in the 2018/2019 Budget.

HON. I. KURIDRANI.- I second the motion, Sir.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Mr. Chair. While the overall sugar budget shows an increase this year due to allocation of \$30 million for Sugar Stabilisation Fund to guarantee the price of \$85 for three years as announced in last year's Budget, Mr. Chair, the actual allocations to expand the industry have declined, and I will just point out the decline:

1. Sugarcane Development and Farmers Assistance for cane planting was allocated \$15.4 million in the 2018/2019 Budget. In this Budget, it has been reduced drastically to about \$4 million which, Mr. Chair, is a massive reduction of about \$11.4 million.
2. In the last Budget, a sum of \$5,659,930 was allocated for cane cartage from Rakiraki to Rarawai Mill. Again, in this Budget, the allocation has been reduced to \$4 million – a reduction of about \$1.6 million.
3. In last year's Budget, \$6.318 million was allocated for Weedicide Subsidy. In this Budget, it has been whittled down to \$1 million, a reduction of about \$5.318 million.
4. In the last year's Budget, \$6 million was allocated to repair Cane Access Roads. This Budget has a provision of only \$3 million, a 50 percent reduction or a reduction of \$3 million.
5. In last year's Budget, \$1 million was given for Farm Mechanisation, that was likely for the one-third allocation for mechanical harvesters. This Budget has also been reduced to \$500,000.
6. The Individual Small Grants Scheme has also been reduced by 50 percent from \$1 million to \$500,000.
7. The only increase has been Fertilizer Subsidy by a little over \$266,000 to about over \$15.6 million, \$2 million that was allocated last year.
8. The Tractor-Mounted Harvester last year and New Farmers Initiative of \$500,000 has been evened out.

Mr. Chair, what we are saying is that if you add all the reductions in that SEG, it all comes to about \$30.1 million minus the marginal increase to Fertilizer Subsidy. What we are saying is, I think this motion is really to help the Government because the Government is saying that they are expanding the sugar industry and the targets that they have set is quite interesting. What we are really saying is, the \$85 guaranteed price which incidentally was proposed by NFP in 2014, Mr. Chair, we believe that if we are drastically reducing the expansion programme and the support that the farmers were going to get, then

given the lapse of time of about four years to raise the guaranteed price to \$85, I think it will have a very serious implication.

I think if you go to history and the Honourable Leader of Opposition is here, he was the PM during the SVT days with the Leader of Opposition at that time, because of the drought in 1997/1998, the sugar production declined drastically and the \$14 million that was agreed with the Opposition and the Government at that time actually helped to raise the sugar production within one year from about \$2 million to about \$4 million, and I think this allocation is very important. In fact, if I may say, Mr. Chairman, the Prime Minister's Permanent Secretary was quoted as saying that, "For some reasons, these grants did not contribute to the increase that was expected." We need to find out why? If those grants have not led to increase or they are in the process of being planted and this could be seen in the following year, but taking it away immediately after it was put in place - some of the initiatives that I have talked about last year, I think this will have a very, very, negative impact on Government's own plan to actually increase or expand the sugar industry to a reasonable level. So, Chairman, in that sense, I think this is a good motion to actually help the Government to keep their promise of expanding the sugar industry further. Thank you, Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Gavoka, you have the floor.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Yes, I support that motion, Honourable Chairman. In the last few days, the Honourable Kuridrani was attacked for suggesting that too much has been given into sugar, but that will continue to be highlighted if sugar continues to fail. We really want to see sugar to recover, to deserve what it has been given, it has been given a lot. If it continues to fail, it will turn people away from sugar, and the demand to divert the funds into non-sugar areas. Government really has to up its acts, you cannot continue this way.

You look at the history here, they inherited sugar in 2006 at \$3.22 million tonnes. According to the forecast there, \$1.9 million tonnes in 2019, they keep blaming my colleague to my right here because of land issues, but there is enough land in this country. There is close to 80,000 hectares available for farming, under 40,000 is under cultivation. Why do you not cultivate that available land and bring up production to the level we used to have before, and the yield is only 40 tonnes per hectare, whereas it should be around 100 tonnes? So we want to see sugar to regain its former glory, hence this motion. But, Government really has to do what is right and we have asked many times to form a bipartisan commission to look into this thing.

How was it that Honourable Jai Ram Reddy and the Honourable Prime Minister then were able to inject about \$40 million into sugar during the most severe drought in Fiji and had a bumper crop within 12 months. Here we have pumped \$400 million over the last 10 years and the production is still down. Honourable Chairman, we are very serious, we want sugar to recover, but Government has to up its acts, something is not right, and we stand ready to be part of the dialogue to move this along. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Niko Nawaikula, you have the floor.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I support this motion for the following reasons, the motion is asking for a \$10 million increase. This is very critical, this is the functional area of production, and I want to know who in the Government is responsible?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- \$30 million.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- \$30 million is the amount you cut.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- No, he wants \$30 million

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- \$30 million or \$10 million?

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBERS.- \$30 million.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Yes, increase it - \$30 million, even more. So, I want to know who in the Government is responsible for this?

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBER.- For what?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- For cutting this, because this is the production area. The assistance to farmers, the cane cutters, the weedicide. Do you want production to increase or what, so who cut this?

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBER.- No one!

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- You tell us! Why did you cut this when we are all working to try to increase production. It is foolish. Well, that person who cut this is totally foolish.

(Chorus of interjections)

MR. CHAIRMAN. –Order! order!

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Talking about the leases, I think this is a Government that lacks leadership.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBERS.- No!

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- You know Alliance had an arrangement with the Government and enacted an Act called ALTA, and ALTA was the reason for the increase in production.

(Honourable Members interjected)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order!

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- ALTA had 30 years, and the last of the leases that expired was in 1997. You have been in government for how many years now?

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBER.- 13 years.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- 13 years doing nothing. Unable to resolve the land issues.

HON. MEMBER.- Sack the Minister.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Unable to make a statutory increase in the leases. You cannot negotiate that. Why? Because you don't know how to live.

(Laughter)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Those are the reasons, basically, and it is important to increase this. There is another foolish decision that this Government made was to buy all trucks. You already have people there and companies whose livelihood rely on cane trucks, and now you are buying more, for what? To interfere with that? It is critically, it is important. I think it is totally foolish that whoever prepared the budget to cut this, unless to quote Honourable Aseri's words, "you had no option, but to cut". But I still

think the person responsible for preparing this is totally foolish. Because we are all moving towards increasing production and you cut it down by how much, \$30M?

HON. GOVT. MEMBER.- Nonsense!

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Those are the reasons. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Prime Minister, you have the floor.

HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I heard the Honourable Member said that this motion of theirs will help Government now. I have heard that before, countless times from that side of the House, and it is not going to help anyone with all the lies they came up with.

I have said in my Budget speech that the increase of the allocation to the Sugar Industry was \$70.4M, up \$2M from last year. I am not going to break it down like Honourable Biman has said, but there is a hidden figure of about \$20M that we have not mentioned in the budget that will come about....

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. OPP. MEMBER.- Tell us!

HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.-...when we put the sugar policy together with the European Union. So really there is nothing to worry about.

(Hon. Opposition Member interjects)

HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.- No, it is a grant.

(Chorus of interjections)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order! order!

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Mr. Chairman, Sir, if I could also just comment on that. The other point that I would like to make is that if you look at the price that FSC has got which is about \$56 a tonne and the price that is guaranteed is \$85 a tonne. If you extrapolate that, in fact Government needs to give more than \$30M. But the reason why only \$30M has been allocated in this Budget, is because those people who know about the Sugar Cane Industry, you get your payments spread out. So the last payment will actually mean the next financial year. So we will have to in fact put an additional \$20M on top of that. So those who know that will actually calculate, Honourable Prasad, if you had actually calculated, he would know you got another \$20M coming in for this cane seasons crush; the payment will be made in the next season. So it is also there.

Honourable Kuridrani was not criticised about his assistance but about the ethnic teams that he took to it, that is the reason why I criticised it. But I think what is really important to note that the Honourable Niko Nawaikula has actually neglected, he said we had *Tropical Cyclone Winston* that set us back quite tremendously. A lot of cane farms were damaged, in fact we assisted the cane farmers through the payment of their leases et cetera, and the STM Project no one seems to talk about the STM Project. STM Project is equivalent of the NBF scandal. The STM Project many of you do not know about it, if you look at the recent accounts that have been done by the experts, they in fact are saying approximately \$300 million was lost by FSC because of the STM Project. It was an enormously corrupt deal that took place, and we had mills that were lying there, good Australian parts that were in the mill were taken out, Indian parts were put in, half put in, three-quarter put in, some of the stuff are still lying around; incomplete mills.

That is the kind of catch-up they had to do. So, that has not been taken into account when discussing this and obviously it is great to see Honourable Nawaikula new found enthusiasm about the sugarcane industry. Of course the land issue had a tremendous impact on that, but please from a budgetary perspective if you can stick to that, there will be an additional \$20-odd million coming in for this cane crush but it will fall in the next financial year. And, of course Mr. Chairman, as the Honourable Prime Minister highlighted that the EEDF funding from European Union, so we are just finalising the sugar policy.

If you actually look at SEG 7, there is already a sustainable rural livelihood SEG 7 - \$2 million, again this is under EU funding and if you go back to the page in the book itself, you will see where we are getting the grant funding that is already accounted for. The moment that the Sugar Policy is put in place an additional \$20 million specifically directed towards the sugarcane industry.

Because as you can see Aid-in-Kind at the bottom of that particular page, you see technical assistance EU that is the technical people they are providing to be based with the Ministry of Sugar and also to help us achieve the Policy which will give a lot of huge returns to us too.

The Social Mitigation Programme AMSP \$2.4 million that is actually given by the European Union to the SPC that they manage. For example they do roads et cetera in respect to the sugarcane industry itself.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members we will now vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	22
Noes	:	27
Not voted	:	2

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will now vote on Head 35, that the amount of Head 35 – Ministry of Sugar Industry, be approved.

Does any member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of `Ayes` and `Noes`)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	27
Noes	:	23
Not voted	:	1

Head 35 agreed to

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will now suspend proceedings for dinner break. As usual, the dinner will be provided in the Big Committee Room and we resume in an hour.

The Parliament adjourned at 6.59 p.m.

The Parliament resumed at 8.03 p.m.

Head 37 - Ministry of Local Government

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, this session is called to order. The floor is now open for any comments on Head 37-1-1.

(Chorus of 'Noes')

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Programme 1-2? Honourable Niko Nawaikula, you have the floor.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- I have a question to ask on Programme 1-2(10) Preparatory Works for New Swimming Pool-Nasinu (\$480,000); Preparatory Works for Valelevu Sports Stadium (\$ 340,000).

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- It is passed.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- No. you not the Chairman, please. Programme 1-2(10), it has been recurring. Where exactly do you intend to build these two big facilities?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- Mr. Chairman, I could not understand the question. If he can repeat that question?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- I am just asking this has been recurring, the Preparatory Works for New Swimming Pool-Nasinu (\$480,000); Preparatory Works for Valelevu Sports Stadium (\$340,000). I am just asking for the location, where you going to build this?

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- Swimming pool is in Narere area, I really do not know the exact location. It is at the back of the old mini-market. For the stadium that is the Valelevu Stadium that we are talking about.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- The current ground?

MR CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- Yes, it is the same place which will be upgraded.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Programme 1-2; Activity 2.

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor.

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- Thank you Mr. Chairman. I would like to clarify from the Honourable Minister on Programme 1, Activity 2, SEG (9) Compost Bin Pilot Project, the Underdeveloped areas in Nasinu (\$300,000), and also Purchase of Standardised Bins (\$300,000). Again under (R), if the Honourable Minister could give a clarification or explanation of where that project is up to? Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- Thank you Mr. Chairman. The Purchase of Standardised Bins is a Project where we would like to have a consistent bin in all municipalities. The Compost Bin is specifically for Nasinu area, because in Nasinu area, one of the problems we have there are not too many businesses as compared to other municipalities where you can collect business license and you can generate more money. In Nasinu, you have very few ratepayers, but a very big population. Just to reduce the waste in that area, the Compost Bin will be introduced so that people can separate the green waste, kitchen waste and they can convert that into useful material which is the compost, which they can then use for the gardening. These are the two pilot projects listed in that particular SEG.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Vosanibola, you have the floor.

HON. P.W. VOSANIBOLA.- Thank you Mr. Chairman. On Programme 1, Activity 2, SEG (6) Rural Local Authorities (\$300,000), would the honourable Minister clarify on the funds to be granted to the Rural Local Authorities and its purpose?

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- For the Rural Local Authorities, if you go back before 2018, the Rural Local Authorities came under the Ministry of Health, and they were looking after the rural areas. Now there is no Rural Local Authority. Their function has been divided into two parts, the health component went to the Ministry of Health, and local government component which is building plans, the upkeep of that town, waste collection that has come to all the municipalities. For example, Suva is looking after Kadavu, Nausori is looking after Korovou, and Navua is looked after by Lami. Just to manage the office that they have and to assist in the day-to-day management of that place, that money has been set aside.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Ratu Atonio Lalabalavu.

HON. DR. RATU A.R. LALABALAVU.- Thank you Mr. Chairman, through you, just follow up to that question with regards to the allocation going to the Ministry of Health. Is that where the public health inspectors comes in?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister for Health and Medical Services you have the floor.

HON. DR. I. WAQAINABETE.- Thank you Mr. Chairman, through you, the public health component in Ministry of Health does not change. What the Honourable Minister was suggesting Honourable Member was that the rural authority aspects which was covered with health has been separated and demarcated. So the health inspectors with Health concentrate on the public health and the health protection aspect of health. Now, within the peri-urban and urban areas, there is still a lot of coverage between the two groupings of health inspectors and that is expected because we need to work hand in hand in terms of health protection. But the Budget and also the demarcation has happened already. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Aseri Radrodro, you have the floor.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Honourable Chairman. Just a clarification in terms of SEG 10 – National Fire Authority Capital Grant of \$1 million. Can you give details of this Capital Grant, I see that it has been a yearly thing. Is this for the purchase of new fire tenders or for the construction of new buildings?

Similarly, for Municipal Councils Upgrade of Children's Park and Construction of Municipal Mini-Markets, why is the Ministry doing this exercise? What is the role of the relevant municipalities in this projects and which municipalities are this?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister.

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- Mr. Chairman, first of all, I would like to give the breakdown for this National Fire Authority Capital Grant. That Grant is for the procurement of second-hand Fire Trucks and Ambulance, and consultancy work for new fire station in Navua and Tavua. Just preparatory stage (consultancy work).

The Capital Grant that we are talking about, this money, why it is shown here is because Municipal Councils put in their request to the Government under the Challenge Fund. Challenge Fund is a matching fund which started through ADB, so that is why it is shown here where the Government gives them matching grant so they are going to put certain money and the Government gives them certain money to complete that project.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Salote Radrodro, you have the floor.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question had already been asked.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Pio Tikoduadua, you have the floor.

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- Honourable Chairman, SEG 10, a question on the New Town Development - \$1.5 million. Could the Honourable Minister clarify what new town is that and what is the nature of the development mentioned therein?

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBER.- Which SEG?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- SEG 10.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBER.- We told you that time to go to Programme 2.

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- My apology, Mr. Chairman. I will withdraw that till later, sorry.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Gavoka, you have the floor.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. SEG 10, there is an item here, the Completion of Namaka Market in Nadi - \$545,000. I just wonder if this has to do with the improvement of the air circulation in that area. There has been quite a bit of public dialogue on that. The Namaka Market is quite stifling. You read about that in the Letters to the Editors, et cetera, the air ventilation of the Namaka Market.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister.

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. Yes, all that is taken into consideration during the preparatory stage, and that is definitely taken into consideration.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- I mean, the situation we hear today is that there is no ventilation, it is very hot in the area. The air is not circulating well within that area, so when you talk about completion here or is it already part of the

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- We are talking about two projects here, Mr. Chairman. One stage has already been completed and the old Namaka Market is under construction - refurbishment. So that is been taken care of. In both places, we have got fans going. It is a very open concept, so I really do not understand about the ventilation.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- There is quite a bit of dialogue on that.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Saukuru, you have the floor.

HON. J. SAUKURU.- Mr. Chairman, through you, I would like to thank the Honourable Minister and the Government, there have been a lot of projects allocated for Lautoka City. But a clarification from the Honourable Minister about the stray dogs in the city. Is there any control over stray dogs?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Mr. Chairman, the campaign started on the 17th, day before yesterday. It started in Nadi and Suva.

(Honourable Member interjected)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Mr. Chairman, what I have heard was the question about the stray dog campaign and that is what I was explaining. I do not know what is wrong with them. It started on the 17th, the day before yesterday, with Nadi and Suva. They do it one week in each town, and if there is any other area people can send us information and we will respond to that. The entire operation will cost us about \$53,000 this first round of stray dog campaign. As mentioned in the media, this is not about dog poisoning. This is about collecting the dogs. If the owner is not licensed, we will take them away. We will neuter them. We will put them in a safe place with SPCA or with someone, and whoever wants that particular dog can come and take it after paying some fee. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Matanitobua, you have the floor.

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- Honourable Minister, SEG 6 - Navua Operating Grant. Can the Honourable Minister enlighten us on this, what grant?

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- There is an office in Navua that provides services to its people and that is looked after by Lami Town Council. It is the operational cost of that office.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Tikoduadua.

HON. P. TIKODUADUA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In SEG 10, also she did mention here restrooms for Korovou Rural Local Authority. Just a question, where is this going to be constructed? In addition to that, could the Honourable Minister perhaps inform the House what are the plans for the extension of the town, because at the moment it is really, really congested?

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- I am sorry, Mr. Chairman, I did not get his question. The Honourable Member beside me was coughing.

HON. P. TIKODUADUA.- Stop coughing, alright!

First, the allocation on the rest rooms for Korovou, where is that going to be built, on the current site or another place? Also, the town is really getting congested, what is the plan for the extension?

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Now I can address the question that you were initially asking about Korovou. You are talking about the restrooms in Korovou, yes, it was identified that there is a need for it because there is none in that area and that is why the money has been set aside.

HON. P. TIKODUADUA.- There is one, but is it going to be at the same site?

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- Actually, I have no idea. I will be frank with you, I do not know the exact location of that. I can give you those details later on, but at least the funding is set aside for the development and upgrading of the restrooms in Korovou. On the extension of the Korovou Town, we had some issues with the lease. Finally, we have acquired the lease, so now the expansion can continue.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Tuisawau, you have the floor.

HON. RO F. TUISAWAU.- Thank you, Honourable Chairman, just a follow up question on dog poisoning. There has been a lot of issues with the owners, whose dogs have been poisoned, trapped, et cetera,

(Honourable Member interjected)

HON. RO F. TUISAWAU.- Let me finish my question. How do you separate the good dog from the bad dog? How can I identify them?

(Laughter)

HON. DR. M.REDDY.- I just said that a while ago, Mr. Chairman, I said it.

(Chorus of interjections)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order, order!

Honourable Tuisawau, Bad Dog is a pub down the road. It is a very good pub. I only get that from reports not from experience.

(Laughter)

Yes, Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Just a while ago, I explained that we are not doing dog poisoning, we stopped that work three years ago as it is inhumane. Now, he is asking me the question of how do we separate good and bad dogs. Honourable Nawaikula is asking why do dogs mate? Come on, be reasonable! It is common sense question. They will not mate, they are male dogs, they come on heat. Thank you.

(Hon. N. Nawaikula interjected)

HON. DR. M.REDDY.- Not all dogs are de-sexed, the ones which are not de-sexed, they will mate. I will explain to you later on how they do that.

(Laughter)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Qereqeretabua, you have the floor.

HON. L.S. QEREQERETABUA.- If I could, through you, Mr. Chairman, ask the Honourable Minister about the works for the new bus station at Rakiraki, an allocation of \$480,000. What will happen to the old bus stand and indeed, where will the new bus stand be build? I am sorry, it is Programme 1, Activity 2, SEG (10).

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- It is preliminary work at this stage, in other words, the bus stand is already there and we have to look whether it will be the extension of the bus stand at the same place or we have to acquire more land to develop that.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Programme 2, Activity 1, Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Mr. Chairman, SEG 10 – New Town Development. This has been recurring every year for the last eight or ten years and we will know the names. This refers to Nabouwalu, Seaqaqa, Keiyasi and Navua. If you can clarify at what stage because we have been told the planning stage, planning stage, and every time I go to Nabouwalu, I check, but there is nothing there. So, just a progress please, up to where?

HON. P.D. KUMAR.- Thank you for asking that question. Mr. Chairman, for Keiyasi, the EIA is completed and engineering plans are in the final stages. For Korovou, we have just acquired the lease, because it was a very long drawn process to acquire the lease. For Seaqaqa, stakeholder consultation is completed and the next step will take place. For Nabouwalu, the civil works have started. Navua does not come under this programme. It does not come under New Town Development. We are not developing a town, it is already there.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will now vote on Head 37.

(Chorus of interjections)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Just listen! There is no motion on this. We are voting on Head 37, that the amount of Head 37 – Ministry of Local Government be approved.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of 'Ayes' and 'Noes')

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	29
Noes	:	21
Not voted	:	1

Head 37 agreed to.

Head 40 – Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, the floor is open, Head 40, Programme 1, Activity 1.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Thank you, Sir. On Personal Emoluments in SEG 1, there is an increase. Does that impact on the salary of the Honourable Minister because of two positions that he is holding? Just a clarification, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Yes, that is correct. The former Minister's salary used to come from Local Government. Now there is a switch, the salary is now incorporated into this one together with an Assistant Secretary.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Aseri Radrodoro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Chair. Just clarification regarding SEG 6. I wanted to move a motion here but first I would like to get a clarification in terms of the operating grant for Land Transport Authority of \$23 million. It has been reduced from last year. In this operating grant, does it also include the salary of the CEO?

HON. J. USAMATE.- That includes all the operating expenses of LTA.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Ro Teimumu Kepa, you have the floor. Move your motion - Head 40, Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 6.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Thank you, Honourable Chair. My motion is on the Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji, their Operating Grant of \$3,653,540. To increase it to \$1 million and that is to remove ships from the Suva Harbour including wrecks and other maritime areas, including four wrecks in Ono-i-Lau reefs impacting on marine resources. That is my motion, Honourable Chair.

HON. RATU N.T LALABALAVU.- I second the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Thank you, Honourable Chair. Concerns has been voiced over the years on the wrecks that are there in Suva Harbour, and we heard also from various Members including the Member from Ono-i-Lau on the ships that are there on the reef. So, that increase is to look at removing those ships from the reefs and Southern Phoenix, as we heard only a few weeks ago, was one such ship and we have been told that it has been totally removed. I hope so, Honourable Chairman.

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Because the people of Nadonumai and Navukavu, these are the areas where they source their food from and they have been complaining over the years in the different taste from the fish stock and shell fish that they go to the reef and *qoliqoli* areas to get their food from.

Also from the professional divers who take tourists on diving expeditions between the reef and Suva Harbour, they are embarrassed by the sea bed and all the different types of equipment that are on that sea bed which have not been removed over the years. And very worriedly last year, Honourable Chairman, there was a post on *Facebook* on one of these divers who caught a ship deliberately leaking oil into the Suva Harbour, and it was done on a Sunday morning. Maybe MSAF was not there, as they were away for the weekend, but, it was on *Facebook* and that caused a lot of stir. So that is why I am proposing this motion, Honourable Chairman, on the wrecks that are not only there in Suva Harbour, but also in the mangroves around the Lovonilase area. So that is why I am bringing this and the fishing license too. *Vinaka*.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Thank you, Chairman. And just to tell the Honourable Member, that MSAF is not responsible for removing wrecks, this is the responsibility of the Ports. Sir, I would recommend that maybe that motion should be taken back because it is not the MSAF that is responsible for that.

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. J. USAMATE.- Maybe the motion can be withdrawn, it is the wrong agency.

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- That is what we got from the website.

HON. J. USAMATE.- This is the problem of relying on social media.

(Laughter)

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- That is not social media, social media is *Facebook*, which I see you on all the time, Honourable Minister.

(Laughter)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- If he can take note of that, Honourable Chairman, because it comes under him too, the wrecks that are there on Suva Harbour.

HON. J. USAMATE.- I recommend that that motion be withdrawn because MSAF is not responsible for removing wrecks.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You are withdrawing this motion?

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Can he clarify who is responsible for that?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, could you clarify?

HON. J. USAMATE.- The MSAF is not responsible for removing wrecks.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Alright, and who is responsible?

HON. J. USAMATE.- Maybe Ports, but, I understand what the MSAF does.

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- That comes under the Honourable Minister, so he can take note of that. Thank you, Honourable Chairman.

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. J. USAMATE.- Mr. Chairman, Sir, the responsibility for removing wrecks is actually the ship owners, they have the responsibility to remove the ships and the Fiji Ports to supervise.

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. J. USAMATE.- MSAF is responsible for the safety of people travelling on ships. To make sure the ship is safe and people are looked after while travelling on the boats. Sir, once again I recommend that the motion be withdrawn.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Aseri Radrodoro, you have a motion.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Chairman. My motion is under Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 6 – Land Transport Authority - Operating Grant. I move that it be....

MR. CHAIRMAN.- SEG 10.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- SEG 10 on the Maritime Safety Authority - Capital Grant, to move it by \$1 million (increase).

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- I second the motion, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- - You have the floor.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Regarding the role of the MSAF, I think a majority of the jetties around the islands, say in Natovi and Nabouwalu, they need to be fixed with street lights to ensure that passengers do not have problem in terms of their travelling time.

Secondly, there is a need to fully equip the Maritime Safety Authority Officers because they were responsible for the safety of passengers, for example, when there was an incident outside Tailevu last year with the Patterson Shipping. The officers of MSAF were sort of incapacitated by their lack of boating facilities to ensure the safety of passengers on the ship while being stuck on the reef off Tailevu. So that is the reason for the request for the increase in grant of \$1 million to ensure that they carry out their role diligently and effectively in ensuring passengers on the ships and vessels are properly catered for.

Maybe it is also this time that I also bring in the incident about the *MV Liahona II*, on its way to Kadavu, where it lost the ramp in the high seas. So that justifies the need by MSAF to ensure that they are also fully equipped in them performing and carrying out their duty even at the inspection at the slipway or out at sea. That is the basis for the requested increase, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The budget that we have in terms of the things that we intend to do this year, the budget is adequate for the time being, and in the future we will continue to look at the upgrading the capital that is required for MSAF. Jetties, by the way come under FRA, and for law and order some of these jetties, the police are also involved. It is not just the MSAF that is there, MSAF will be responsible for the loading of people on the ship or otherwise, but the general safety around there the police also has a role that they play.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Nawaikula, you have the floor.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- I wish to support the motion for the following reasons. I know Natovi and Nabouwalu do not have lights. We do not see the reason why they should not have lights because in all the villages you can have your standalone street lights with a switch and everything. There is no reason at all for Natovi, Nabouwalu and I am sure also Taveuni do not have lights, and yet in Natovi and Nabouwalu especially, it is almost on a daily basis when the wharf is being used.

Patterson has a boat running there at 3 o'clock, there is another one at 7 o'clock and there is Interlink that goes at 11 o'clock. So very soon if you do not have lights there, and more safety, you will have a bad accident. Secondly, we also had an accident last year in Patterson, I believe it is because of the overcrowding, we need proper regulation and have safety requirements.

We also need to empower MSAF in relation to the loading and unloading of passengers, in relation to their safety. We have very bad examples during the Christmas season. In Nabouwalu, especially when passengers as well as vehicles were rushing into the boat, and in one case, even the ramp was shifted up where people still managed to jump over or something like that. We need MSAF to probably look into

that because otherwise very soon we will have an accident. We need them empowered, we need their work improved and maybe more staff too. I think the problem there is staffing. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister for Defence.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to clarify whether the role of the Police fits into this, particularly when people are stranded once they have left the port. This is when we were discussing Head 20 yesterday, Honourable Chairman, Sir. On Programme 1, Activity1, SEG 9, the Honourable Tabuya was insisting on the boat for Kadavu. This is exactly why that allocation is there so that the Police can be given the boats, because once the vessel leaves the port when something happens at sea that is where the role of the Police comes in. The incident that happened off the coast of Tailevu last year prompted us to go into this. Of course, we are also liaising with the Japanese Government for more fast boats as well for the Police for this purpose.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will now vote on this motion.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	22
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	2

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, I give the floor to Honourable Aseri Radrodro to move your motion.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Mr. Chair, I move that Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 6 on Land Transport Authority (LTA) to increase by \$5million.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- I second the motion, Chair.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Chair, the increase of \$5 million is to bring back that operating grant that has been reduced this year from \$23 million to \$28 million. The basis now is that the CEO has been confirmed to have also been paid from this allocation with the amount of \$0.5million minimum, the staffing of the Land Transport Authority may also result in the redundant number. But in this case, the LTA has a role to provide safety on our roads, and therefore they need to have a visible presence on the road. One of the roles of the employees involved in the road safety operations of the LTA, this is something that is now disappearing from our road. We see LTA officers boarding public transport and also....

(Honourable Member interjected).

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Just give me a second. And to ensure there is a smooth flow of traffic on our roads. But unfortunately, Mr Chair, this reduction will also mean a reduction in their visibility, probably it is taken over by the Police. Another important aspect of the services of LTA is the provision of services for motor vehicle fitness and all these other services regarding the fitness of vehicles. They need to increase their services to also include Saturday. Most of the vehicle owners are working people so they have no time or less time to be coming to the LTA Offices to have a vehicle fitness, so Saturday is usually a good time that certain offices around the country in Fiji needs to be open to allow for those who are not able to bring their vehicles during working week, Monday to Friday. Similarly, we note that there are vehicle agencies that are also conducting its services, but with the number of increasing vehicles on our

roads LTA also needs to increase its operating hours to not only close at 3 o'clock on a daily basis, maybe to close at 5 o'clock.

HON. MEMBER.- 24/7 basis.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- But that requires additional overtime hours, so therefore there needs to be an efficient service delivery, maintaining road safety on our roads as a huge number of road accidents and road deaths that are happening. Operating grants to LTA needs to be equitably provided to allow for better working environment and healthy employees. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the sentiments by the Honourable Member is admirable. We need to make sure that LTA does its work better but we know that in the Budget scenario that we have now, there has to be a reduction in the Budget because of the overall purpose of the Budget. There is a need therefore for this breakthrough to find ways in which we can deliver the same level of outcomes or improved outcomes with less resources, so there is going to be a focus on breakthrough - making a break from the past by stop doing things that have no value, we need to get rid of a lot of the non-value-adding activities part of the process.

There is going to be a major focus of organisations such as MSAF, LTA and FRA to relook at the whole way they do things. There is going to be a stronger focus on that, there is a stronger focus on using technology so that you can get more efficiency. There is also going to be a stronger focus on customer-transformation of the services, moving away from paper to digital processes that will require less people, a lot more focus on investing in people. They are working together in teams, coaching, personal development and support, making sure that you have smart support mechanisms to help people do their job more effectively and efficiently, relook at how jobs are designed, relook at how people are led. We look at the specific job indicators that you tie to the performance so that you can manage their performance better. A lot of focus on process management so that we can try to improve the focus that we have within LTA. The focus will always be there to deal with those indicators of making sure that there is less fatalities on the road. By the way, when people get on the buses, the LTA staff are there to enforce the e-ticketing rules, not because they have less money to travel on the buses instead of the way they normally travel. There will still be that strong focus on making sure that LTA is able to deliver what it was set up for.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will now vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	23
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	1

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Programme 1-2?

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Mr. Chairman, Sir, Programme 1, Activity 2, SEG (6) Shipping Services Subsidy, there is a slight reduction. Through you, Mr. Chairman, may I ask the Honourable Minister, does that mean that there will be less vessels operating to service the islands? Can we have some clarification through you, Mr. Chairman, from the Honourable Minister?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That allocation is basically for the Shipping Franchise Scheme, subsidising of vessels that go to uneconomical routes. The utilisation at the beginning of this month was around 66 percent of the current budget, whereas it should be at 80 percent. Apparently, this is a reduction, it is not going to affect the number of trips. There are nine routes, 14 trips per month, the same number of trips will go. It has not been reduced, so in terms of the provision of services to the islands for the Shipping Franchise Scheme, nothing is affected. The same number of trips will be taking place.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Head 40-1-2(6), Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My motion on Programme 1-2(6) Shipping Services Subsidy (\$2,317,000), to increase by another \$1 million.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- I second the motion, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor, Honourable Member.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think there is a need to review this Shipping Services Subsidy in terms of being inclusive, participants to the shipping subsidy exercise. I think they need to also improve the type of services they have been offered to those that travel to the outer islands and maritime islands to ensure that they receive better conditions, and the need for more players will ensure that the provision of services to those travelling in the maritime islands will improve. Also to probably encourage and entice participation from provincial council boat owners or those who are intending to engage in shipping services to ensure that they have a fall-back plan. Also to assist them in getting financial assistance from financial institutions as this will also improve their operations, at the same time, improve the services to the travelling public who use the vessels that are travelling to the maritime islands and the outer islands. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Thank you, Mr. Chair, the Shipping Franchise Scheme is currently being reviewed. There is a paper that is going up to Cabinet. Some of things that we intend to do, currently the shipping franchise the contract is given for a year. So one of the things that we intend to do is make it a longer term contract, either 10 or 15 years, because we know that if a shipping provider knows that he can get a contract for 10 to 15 years, it gives him an incentive to go and look for a new boat and as part of that, there will be a consideration of the review of the actual subsidisation rates. That has been in process for some time now, investigations have been happening, the paper will be going to Cabinet and then will be addressed at that point in time.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	21
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	3

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, Activity 3.

(Chorus of `Noes`)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Programme 3, Activity 1. You have the floor, Honourable Member.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Mr. Chair, just the application regarding the SEGs under Government Shipping Services, Activity 3 – Upgrade of Government Shipping Vessels (\$500,000), can we just get details of how many vessels are these because we have

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Programme 1, Activity 3.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Programme 1, Activity 3.

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- No we have not touched Government Shipping.

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- We have just finished Programme 1, Activity 2.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Programme 3, Activity 1.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- We have not touched Activity 3 – Government Shipping, it is important. All right, go on.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Activity 2.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Programme 3, Activity 1.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- We have moved on to Activity 2, Activity 3.

(Chorus of `Noes`)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Ratu Matanitobua.

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- *Vinaka*, Mr. Chair. On SEG 9 – Purchase of Generator for Nabouwalu, there were four the last time. When will they complete and a timeline, Honourable Minister?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Percent retention, the generator is there, it is just the 10 percent retention; final payment.

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- Is it operational, Honourable Minister?

HON. J. USAMATE.- Yes, there is another three generators. There is a new generator there and there is another three generators that are coming to Nabouwalu. This is the retention, there will be four generators altogether. This is the retention payment. Nabouwalu will get good electricity, Honourable Radrodro, do not worry.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Radrodro, you have the floor.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Mr. Chair. Still on that same SEG if the Honourable Minister could be more clear because right now the power supply cuts off at 11.00 o'clock in the night, and comes on at 6.00 o'clock in the morning. So will these generators replace it to become a 24 hours supply; otherwise right now is intermittent power supply.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Mr. Chair, I can guarantee that the power in Nabouwalu will be much better because apart from the one that is there now there is going to be another three generators that are being sent to Nabouwalu, plus additional ones for Rotuma and Lakeba. Some of the other places are hybrid systems where you have both solar and diesel, but in Nabouwalu in particular it is diesel. But they will have those

additional generators in place. I cannot actually tell you whether it will be 24 hours, I have to talk to the staff.

(Honourable Member interjected)

HON. J. USAMATE.- I will come back to you. In the next session ask me a question and I will answer it or email me and I will be able to answer your question, but the provisional power will be there.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Programme 4, Activity 1. Honourable Biman Prasad you have the floor.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I noticed that under Programme 4, Activity 1, SEG 10, almost the entire Grid Extension Programme is on 'R'. I think the issues that the Honourable Minister needs to explain, and I can highlight some that have been brought to our notice, payments for rural electrification project made by people and villages as settlements in some cases three years now work has not begun. Obviously, you know we have a post tariff increment by EFL; regular power outage or non-going maintenance work in the aftermath of natural disasters, I mean we all know that projects on hold due to land consent, that may be outside of the Ministries; non-compliance to performance bond requirement; the issues with Rural Electrification Projects and there are number of other issues like compliance to a requirement.

In addition to that the Audit Report of 2017 into the infrastructure sector actually recommends that the Ministry should ensure that performance, bonds and other matters relating to contract management are properly carried out so that the interest are adequately protected. Basically, the report says that you know you need to do proper due diligence in terms of awarding the contracts for some of these projects. I just like to hear your comment on this, and perhaps explain why you put all those on 'R'.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Obviously, if projects are going to be delayed for any reason at all it is better to have the money available and can be used elsewhere rather than tying it up in the particular Ministry; that is why it is there for "R". It's being sensible about the usage of your money.

In case of what we want to do for electricity, it is very clear. We want to make sure that everyone can have electricity, a safe supply of electricity by the year 2021. Grid extension is obviously one of the important things that we do in trying to move towards that aim.

For grid extension, the Department of Energy pays money to EFL to extend the grids. One of the major problems that we have at the moment is the number of construction companies or wire electrical companies that can actually do this work. There is a severe limitation of that, in terms of wiring, sometimes the same companies that are doing the individual house wiring are also doing the pulling of the grid. So that is a he major limitation at the moment. You will see in some places around Fiji the poles are up but the wiring has not been done because sometimes these companies have to move around. This is one of the things that we are wanting to encourage that there can be more private sector becoming involved in this.

We are also looking at this from our own department in the Ministry in terms of our own trades people that are in electrical that are providing electrical services, government is now encouraging them to set up their own companies. This is a severe limitation that we have. So that's why we will continue to do this, we have three years to reach our target of 2021 of providing electricity to everyone, but we will continue on that, the grid extension payment will be still taking place. These issues about acquiring land or getting the rights for the land, but I think the major limitation is the number of good electrical contractors out there, so we are trying to address that particular issue.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Aseri Radrodro, you have the floor – Head 40, Programme 4, Activity 1 – SEG 10.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- There are two motions there on SEG 10, Sir, on grid extension or solar.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You were the one who wrote it.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Sir, Mr Chair, on the Grid Extension, the motion is to increase the allocation by \$1 million.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Is there a seconder?

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- I second the motion, Mr. Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor, Honourable Member.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you Mr. Chair. I think according to the list that we have of grid extension that has been provided, some of the areas that has missed out over the last Parliament term and also in this Budget session are areas like Veiraisi; Muslim League in Nabua known as *Navasa*, and Sasawira. These are the areas that we had to get attention in terms of grid extension. These are just areas around the Suva–Nausori corridor.

Also Chair, as I have also mentioned previously in debates in Parliament, is the issue of black wires. There are certain households that after cyclone disasters, they lost power electricity because the black wire was cut off because of strong winds. From then till today, they have yet to have a reconnection in terms of electricity. The simple reason is that they cannot afford to pay for an electrical contractor individually. I think when they had the initial wiring connection in the village, it was a group exercise and when they lose their individual black wires, they have to get the individual electrical contractor to get electricity reconnected. These are some of the reasons why there is a need to increase this grid extension, not only to provide grid extension but also post reconnection. I think it is a duty for the Ministry to ensure that there is continuous supply of electricity, and not only leave it at the point of connection and post services after connection becomes the responsibility of the homeowner. Thank you Mr. Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Mr. Chairman, I wish to speak and support the motion. If I could use two examples, there are two villages, Vunidawamoli and Natua that had been waiting for the grid extension; it is three years now. The Honourable Prime Minister came to Wailevu to open the Uluivalili College, thanks for that, and rightfully he agreed for the landowners who are part of the main to also have the benefit. He agreed about three years ago, and about four times now, every time I go to Labasa, I ask the Turaga ni Koro, ‘let us go to FEA’. The problem is not as the Honourable Minister was saying, new company, but the problem was FEA. Four times we went to Labasa and they say that they are waiting for the approval, approval, approval. I said “Why?”, because it has to come right from the top. From us on this side of the House, we can only empower you with money, it is not our problem whether the subcontractors are not performing or the FEA are not performing. We only look at it from here to raise the issue by getting the amount; those are the reasons. You cannot afford to let these poor people wait for three, four years for something which is in our position to solve. That is the reason why I support this motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Bulitavu, you have the floor.

HON. M.D. BUILTAVU.- Thank you, Mr. Chair, Sir. I support the motion by the Honourable Aseri Radrodro on the increase by \$1 million on the allocation of Grid Extension Programme. And I concur with Honourable Nawaikula in terms of the turnaround time of those projects and to its completion from phase one to phase two, to the various phases. While you are announcing the budget, people are of the feeling that it will be done. And if you look at this year's Budget, one of the major programmes that is missing from this SEG 10 is the rural electrification programme. What you have here is just the grid extension and house wiring of those grid extension and the solar. You do not have the rural electrification programme which was in the last budget, it is not here.

HON. MEMBER.- Being renamed.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Again, that was a specific allocation if you look into last year's budget. Renamed, relabelled, that has been the hallmark of this FijiFirst Government. But again, let me go back to the issue, the listed villages there in the Budget Kit per division and if you look for example, in the Northern Division, most of those grid extensions have been there from two previous budgets. Nakelikoso to Wainikoro, even Naselesele that was already there, and for Vunimako, Rokosalase, probably closer to where the Honourable Minister for Defence, his farm is at Vunimako. But again, the expectation by the public that this is done on time. One of the problems faced by the contractors when they are in discussions with these villages is that when they say that the money is not there, they are waiting for the materials. What is causing this delay is could be the issue of money or the lack of allocation, and that is why I support this motion probably what is needed is more funds to be available and that projects do not abruptly end and give false hopes to the people who are waiting, because you have already said that you will bring electricity to everybody and that is the duty of any government and it is taxpayers money. That is why I support this motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Prime Minister, you have the floor.

HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.- Just a lot of talk over nothing, Chair. The Honourable Minister has already said that we will have electricity, and we will have it. I just want to tell a little story. I went to a village in Rewa some years back. Pardon, the good lady sitting across the room from me. I went to Rewa and in this particular village, they asked me if I can provide them with water. They said we have not had water for the last 30 years. I said, "No! You have not had any water for the last 100 years, because there was no water at all in that particular village from day one." Of course, now they have water. They have been waiting for electricity for the last 50 years since they put in Monasavu. We will put in electricity, we will put in the grid. The Honourable Minister has said that we did. They used to be charged 10 percent before now no longer, the contribution which used to be 10 percent, we have given that up. You can have free electricity from now on.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Ro Teimumu Kepa.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Thank you, Honourable Chair. On the water in Rewa, I will come to that when we are looking at Water Authority of Fiji. But right now, on the Grid Extension Programme, we would like to thank the Government for the grid extension to areas like Nairoro and Lomanikoro, however, what I wanted to bring up was that when they have these contractors come and prepare the area for putting up the poles, what they have done in some of the villages including the two that I am speaking on here, they just come with their chainsaw and cut very good trees. We are very mindful of the 4 Million Tree initiative which we are supporting, but they came and cut very good trees like mahogany, pine and *kauvula*, which families have been eying to fell to build their homes.

They just come and randomly cut them, leave them lying on the side of the area where these poles are supposed to go up. So, I would like the Honourable Minister to be aware of that because we almost had an accident when one of subcontractors or contractors came with a chainsaw which was too small for this

tree which had about three trunks. His chainsaw was too small and when the tree fell, he was almost jammed in the middle of the trunks. So we would like to just bring that to your attention. Thankfully, we had people nearby, otherwise that would have been a very bad accident. So we are just asking that and be mindful of the contractors, subcontractors and the equipment that they bring with them and most importantly, our beautiful trees, just do not cut them. Thank you, Honourable Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- I just want to make a point on the cash issue. Honourable Professor Prasad, again, is making a big deal about all those under 'R.' He actually answered the question. In his sentence, he said that some of these contracts are not being administered properly, and this is precisely the reason why we have it under 'R,' so it can actually be administered properly.

The other point is that, the money allocation has been done based on the capacity of the contractors to be able to do the job, because there are also a lot of issues pertaining to the licensed contractors. These all have to be licensed, certified by EFL, only then can they carry out the works. Then you look at the capacity, how much they can deliver, and that is the second point I want to make.

The third point, Mr. Chairman, Sir, Energy Fiji Limited, for all the grid extensions, what we have been doing for the past number of years and which is what we are going to change, we have already notified the Board, normally when you have someone doing some contractual work for you, like someone used the example of building a school and a home, if it is worth \$2 million, you simply do not pick up the \$2 million and give it to the contractor. You pay it in instalments - the mobilisation cost, first quarter, second quarter or the roof is being put on.

In this case here, Energy Fiji Limited always used to demand the money upfront from us. Now, we are going to change that and we will pay them as the work progresses, which obviously means that our ability to manage our cash is a lot better now. I just wanted to make that point regarding that. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister Usamate, you have the floor.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Yes, I think the point has been made. The major limitation has been the number of contractors that are available. So if you put in another million dollars and there is no contractor to carry out the work, we are still left in the same situation. So just throwing money at the problem is not going to solve that.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- We will vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	22
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	2

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, I give the floor to the Honourable Aseri Radrodro, for his motion on Head 40-4-1(10). You have the floor, Sir.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Programme 4-1(10), to increase Solar Home Systems Programme by \$100,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- And the seconder?

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Mr. Chairman, I second the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor, Honourable Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Sir. I think the rationale behind this motion is having to look through the listing of new solar home installations, it is seen that in Naitasiri there are four:

- Wairuarua;
- Nagonenicolo;
- Nakida;
- Matawailevu; and
- Nasava in Wainimala.

We thank the Government for those villages, but one village that has been missing over the last Parliament term and again in this listing is Roma Village in the farfetched Naitasiri. We request that this village be included, with that proposed motion, in this year's listing so that they can be attended to in terms of their solar lighting needs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Minister you have the floor.

HON. J. USAMATE. – Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Some of this money that we have in this almost \$5.5 million include stuff that is rolled over plus new solar home systems. The ones that have been allocated here will be done in this new financial year. But the target is 2021, so after this happens, we will be looking at mopping up every single other area, it is not just Roma, it is a few other places. There are some places next to our urban areas, but our target remains. We are firmly fixed on that target (2021) because that was the target that we are committed to and we want to make sure that we can make it happen.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will vote on this motion.

Vote Cast:

Ayes	:	22
Noes	:	25
Not Voted	:	4

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, Parliament will now vote on Head 40, that the amount of Head 40 - Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport be approved.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of 'Ayes' and 'Noes')

Votes cast

Ayes	:	27
Noes	:	22
Not Voted	:	2

Head 40 agreed to.

Head 41 – Water Authority of Fiji

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, Head 41-1-1. Honourable Tikoduadua, you have the floor.

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is on Head 41-1-1(5). On the one hand, the target of Government is to supply water to all our people by 2021, but on the other hand, the allocation for Rural Water Scheme has been reduced from \$27 million to \$11.3 million. Can the Honourable Minister care to explain how WAF is going to achieve its target?

HON. J. USAMATE.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I did not get the exact question.

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- I will repeat the question, Honourable Chairman. On one hand, the target of Government is to supply water to 85 per cent of people by 2021, but on the other hand, the allocation of Rural Water Schemes has been reduced from \$27 million to \$11.3 million. Can the Honourable Minister care to explain how WAF is going to achieve its target?

HON. J. USAMATE.- I think the details of how WAF is going to achieve its target is outlined in the Budget Kit from Page 131, you have all the details there. It lays out the money that is made available for the Operating Grant that is the amount of money that we have for the water sources and water treatment plants of around \$30,685,000. There are Programmes that we have under Package Water Treatment Plants; the Capacity Upgrade of Waiwai, Deuba, Nagado, and Vunidawa; the Civil Works for Levuka and Savusavu, Namau and Balevuto; all the construction of the new Tasman Tanks, that is outlined from page 131.

The ongoing projects that we have, for Nabouwalu Package Plants, Levuka and Savusavu; New Water Source for Vakaderebua; Automation of Nagado, Matavo and Vakaderebua water system, et cetera. It goes on to page 132. It has all the details for the Water Distribution System Project of \$25 million, and is over up to page 133, the Rollover Projects which goes right upto page 134, which states the Integrated Meter Management of \$2 million that is allocated there.

The work that will be done on the Non-Revenue Water Reduction Project, we want to minimise all the losses. The Water Catchment Management Programme on page 135 and from page 136 to page 137 lists all of those programmes that are going to take place.

You will also notice that under this Head, you will see that there is also some Aid-in-Kind. You will find that there is money there from ADB for the Urban Water Supply and Waste Water Management Project of around \$13,500,000. There is also programme money being footed by JICA of around \$500,000 for reducing unaccounted water. There is money also from the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, another \$1 million there. So, all of these will all be working towards achieving the targets of Water Authority of Fiji.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, just going back to the earlier questions regarding Forest Reserves on those situated in the water catchment areas, can you ensure that for those *mataqali* in Savura, *Mataqali* Valebure, they have also requested for their compensation of the use of their forest area along the Savura Catchment, which I do not see it here in your listing on page 135. They have written to the Water Authority of Fiji regarding their compensation for 51 years on the opportunity cost and lost on potential revenue over this period.

HON. J. USAMATE.- I think if that land is State land, if it is iTaukei land then it will be the Water Authority dealing with iTLTB, and then iTLTB then has to deal with the landowners. That is my understanding. I may be wrong but that is my understanding.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Similarly, Mr. Chairman, on this Operating Grant, I note there is a significant decrease from \$13 million regarding staffing issues. We noted that in your listing is the Provision of Services but regarding staffing issues that are involved, particularly for Waste Water Treatment Plant, for example, the Kinoya Sewerage, and also in some other areas around Viti Levu and Vanua Levu, in ensuring that they comply, that they are given proper suits. Most of them have been in the industry for more than 20 years and they have been requesting for OHS compliance regarding their uniforms because they breathe every day and the impact after 20 years of services. They are not given proper medical certificate or medical treatment after 20 years of service in the Kinoya Sewerage Treatment Plant. So, hopefully your grant will address the request and the needs for those employees.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Without a doubt, yes, occupational health and safety is the fundamental right of every employee, every person who works in this country, including the people who work at Water Authority of Fiji. We need to protect them. I know that some of the waste water treatment plants around Fiji are under stress because the regional capacity has been exceeded by the population in those particular areas, but WAF has programmes and plans to address that.

You will notice also that one of those Aid-in-Kinds, the one that we have from ADB is about Urban Water Supply and Wastewater, so there are components also on waste water that is in that project. The big project that we are doing now for Viria, that is going to cover, I think from Korovou to Suva, there is a significant part of that project, I think it is around \$800 million altogether. There is a significant part of that project that also covers waste water, looking after the waste that comes out of the system.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister for Lands, you have the floor.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Thank you Mr. Chairman. The issue that was earlier raised by Honourable Radrodro, we have searched our records in terms of some of the Savura Dam issue. In fact, our records demonstrate that when the area was secured in 1960s there was a compensation paid with a sum of £4,000 in those days. So there was a group that received the compensation, the exact amount is stated there on the file, if my memory serves me right, it is something like £4,600. The amount of compensation was paid and it was cleared. It is just that the Land Owning Unit has lost their records, they have been coming to our office and we have briefed them on the issue. So, the issue on compensation does not arise if it was paid in those days. The matter is settled for all intents and purposes. That is a lot of money in those days.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Ro Teimumu Kepa, you have the floor.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Mr. Chairman, on this motion which is on the Operating Grant for Water Authority of Fiji. I am one of the many people who are blessed in Rewa to have good clean safe drinking water, which we are able to drink straight from the tap as we have been able to do for many years. However, there are many other people in Rewa, some of whom have spoken to the Honourable Prime Minister who are without water. We have two reservoirs, one is in Lomanikoro and the other one is in Navaka, and I think I brought it up in the House at one time, in that I asked the people there in Navaka, Noco, "What about your reservoir?" And what he said to me was that it was just looking down at them, there is no water. "*E va evei na wai? E warai sara la ni dua na wai.*" So that is what is happening there in the two reservoirs.

I have spoken to the Honourable Minister about it. If they were able to produce the water that it was constructed for, all the areas in the Delta area, we would be able to have water including Natena, I think Mr. Chairman, they would be able to have good clean and safe drinking water from those two reservoirs. I have already spoken to the Honourable Minister about it and there are people who are waiting for that. However, before that happens, they are swimming in the river, washing their clothes in the river, so those are all kinds of things that are happening in the river because they do not have any water. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, I give the floor to the Honourable Bulitavu. You have the floor, move your motion.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that Head 41, Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 6 - Operating Grant – Water Authority of Fiji be moved up by \$20 million.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Is there a seconder?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Mr. Chairman, I second the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason to move this by \$20 million, given that the Honourable Minister just said that most of employees are under stress.

HON. J. USAMATE.- What?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Under stress.

HON. J. USAMATE.- When did I say that?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- In the last time you had spoken. Just now when you were responding to the Operating Grant. You can pick up the *Hansard* tomorrow to check that. But the issue for this \$20 million, given the amount of projects that are here and the roll-over projects. Now, the layoff of WAF project workers, this \$20 million is to re-instate these WAF project workers and also to show that the delivery of the service can be done in the next financial year because they are specialised project workers, they know what they do and you will be doing the repeated projects every year, and these are the ones that you will be relying on. There is all the right reason to reinstate them and to provide the necessary money to re-employ them into WAF, and through this \$20 million they should be re-employed. That is the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Thank you, Mr. Chair, Sir. One of the issues that we have at WAF is the way that they moved out of being a Department of Water into becoming a commercial statutory body, they did not plan it out as well as they did for the FRA. So one of the things that we see, there are still legacy issues there. I think there might be a bit of fat in terms of their processes, in terms of their staffing. The situation that we have now in the reduction of Operational Grant, that will also be an opportunity to get rid of some of that non-value adding process, non-value adding time that is in-built into the organisation.

I have seen from talking to WAF so far with the Chair, they are already looking at ways of getting rid of the fat that was there. So that is going to be an advantage of what we are doing now. They are looking at outsourcing non-core work, strengthening their governance in terms of their cash flow planning, looking at all their expenses, weekly and monthly targets, all of these things have been strengthened. Where it is necessary to outsource things they will outsource them, they are bringing in and looking at cost efficiencies, they are re-looking at the way that they assign jobs, multi-tasking their workforce, realigning functions, re-allocating and pooling of resources; all of that process will go into addressing the problem. Just throwing \$20 million there just like that is not necessarily going to make it much more effective and much more efficient. The project workers are there for the duration of the project; when you have the money for the project, they are brought in to serve that project. That is the way that it has been and that is an efficient way of managing that kind of work. I think just throwing in \$20 million like that is not going to improve it overnight.

MR .CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	22
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	2

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, Parliament will now vote on Head 41, that the amount of Head 41 – Water Authority of Fiji be approved.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of `Ayes` and `Noes`)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	27
Noes	:	22
Not Voted	:	2

Head 41 agreed to.

Head 42 – Ministry of Waterways and Environment

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, Head 42, Programme 1, Activity 1.

(Chorus of `Ayes` and `Noes`)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Programme 2, Activity 1.

(Chorus of `Ayes` and `Noes`)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Aseri Radrodro you have the floor.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Yes, Mr. Chair, thank you. I Just want a clarification in terms of the allocation under Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG 8 – Coastal Erosion Protection Works of \$5 million and the Drainage and Flood Protection of \$3 million. I just wanted clarification, is this similar to the river embankment?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- The coastal protection deals with seawall structural bank protection, whereas drainage work, there are couple of types of drainage work we do: Rural Residential, Rural Farm, Farm Infield Drainage, then we have got the drainage schemes that we have to maintain. These are the inner schemes under the old bracket model. Then we have the Municipal Council Drainage Scheme. So, all those separate allocations are there. So, this coastal erosion protection, these are allocations for specific coastal bank protection work that we have to do for this financial year out of the list that we have.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Matanitobua, you have the floor.

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- Thank you, Mr. Chair. On the same issue, the Minister mentioned about seawall. How many seawalls are listed for this \$5 million?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- For the coming financial year, we are looking at 10.

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- 10 seawalls?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Yes.

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- Veivatuloa is included?

HON. P.K. BALA.- No.

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- Why?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- I will have to look at the list. I cannot give it but looking at around 10.

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- They will cancel it now.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Programme 3, Activity 1. Honourable Qereqeretabua, you have the floor to move a motion. Programme 3, Activity 1, SEG 4.

HON. L.S. QEREQERETABUA.- Thank you, Mr. Chair. I was going to actually ask a question before

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You can the question then you can move a motion.

HON. L.S. QEREQERETABUA.- Thank you, Sir. Through you, Mr. Chair, I would just like to ask the Honourable Minister at SEG 7 - Information Technology Services of \$15,000. Would you mind explaining Honourable Minister who the supplier is or who the vendor is and what exactly that is going to be used for? Because I have been trying to get onto the website of the Department of Environment, a word press is actually blocked by GOVNET. Word press is mostly associated with blogging and has been blocked from GOVNET. So, the Department of Environment website is actually blocked if you try and get on it from GOVNET. That was the first part of my question, Honourable Minister.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Now, that allocation is for purchase of IT equipment, but I believe you are talking about our Home Page that is under progress. We had outsourced this to a vendor to do the entire homepage. Initially, we did it for the Department of Waterways, then we had to merge it with the Department of Environment, so that has not been uploaded at the moment, the final one.

HON. L.S. QEREQERETABUA.- If I could just ask through you, Mr. Chair, to the Honourable Minister, please could you also while you are working on your website as I mentioned in November that we are unable to access Environmental Complaints Forms on the website even till now.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.-Sure.

HON. L.S. QEREQERETABUA.- Thank you, Sir.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- But in the meantime, you email it to me and I will deal with that.

HON. L.S. QEREQERETABUA.- *Vinaka*.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor for your motion.

HON. L.S. QEREQERETABUA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My motion is for Head 42, Programme 3, Activity 1 on SEG 4, the motion is to increase Vehicle : Fuel and Oil by \$84,000 to \$100,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Is there a seconder?

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- I second the motion, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor.

HON. L.S. QEREQERETABUA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason I am asking for this increased allocation towards vehicle fuel and oil for the environment management activity is because of the difficulty that this Department faces in going out to the field to check on complaints. Even on the Department's Website, under the Waste Management and Pollution Control Sector of the Website of the Environment Department, it actually says the challenges, and I quote, "One of the major challenges is the lack of financial and technical resources." This has been like that for a couple of years now and that is why I am asking. In order to strengthen the environment management part of the Department of Environment, if they cannot get to citizens who are complaining about environmental degradation and pollution, how can they carry out their work if their vehicle allocation for fuel and oil is only \$16,000?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Mr. Chairman, if I may, I do not think that is correct. That is not a constraint at all. If she tells me why we were not able to reach out I will find out why, but on one hand, she just alluded that our Website is not working, now she is saying that she read it from our Website, I am just wondering what she is up to?

HON. L.S. QEREQERETABUA.- I am not up to anything, Honourable Minister. Through you, Mr. Chair, I have been speaking to people, for example up, from the Navua River, who have actually

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- No, you have just said that you found it from our Website that our constraining factor is that we do not have vehicle and fuel, and then you have just said now that our website is not operating. Which one is correct?

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- Navua River.

HON. L.S. QEREQERETABUA.- I do not follow what you are saying.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Wait, let me tell you, this is Parliament.

HON. L.S. QEREQERETABUA.- I did not say the Website is not working, I said you cannot access it from *govnet*, Sir, and when you get on to the Website using non-*govnet* website - search engines, you will see that things have not changed in terms of the challenges that the Department is saying.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- That is the old information.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- We will vote on this motion.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	20
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	4

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, I give the floor to the Honourable Adi Teimumu Kepa, to move her motion on Head 42, Programme 3, Activity 1, SEG 8. You have the floor, Madam.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Honourable Chairman, can I ask a question before the motion on SEGs 1 and 2?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Yes.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Thank you, Honourable Chairman. I just seek reassurance from the Honourable Minister on SEGs 1 and 2, that is throughout the various Programmes under Head 42, if you can reassure the workers, they had a meeting two days ago and there were some concerns with the decrease in SEGs 1 and 2. They might not be able to either get their full pay or there will be a decrease or they will be laid off or something like that. If he can just reassure the workers, this is the Nausori area that there will be no change from their salaries and wages in SEGs 1 and 2, before I go into my motion. Thank you, Honourable Chair.

HON. DR. M.REDDY.- I know where she is leading, Sir. The Luvuluvu, Nausori that she is talking about, Mr. Chairman, Sir, they are project staff, they were involved with dredger-use, a 44 year old dredger, both in Labasa as well as in Nausori. Both of the dredgers are now gone, done and dusted. The staff engaged were under contract, the dredger has gone, they have to go and find another job, that is normal. But the contract that the established staff have, their contracts will be held and they will be given their salary with their FNPF and overtime will be paid if they do overtime jobs. But those staff who are on temporary basis attached to a particular project, when the project is over, they are over.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor to move your motion.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Thank you, Honourable Chair. My motion is on the construction of Naboro Landfill, Stage 2.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You move your motion.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Thank you, Honourable Chair. My motion is on the Construction of Naboro Landfill Stage 2, that there be an increase of \$100,000 to the figures that is already there in the Budget Estimate.

HON. RATU N.T. LALABALAVU.- I second the motion, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor, Madam.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Thank you, Honourable Chair. The motion is in regards to Stage 2 of the Naboro Landfill. There was a Report in September, 2007 Auditor-General's Report on the Naboro Landfill in terms of the gate fees. The original agreement in 2005 was that all landfill users were charged an appropriate fee and all fee passed to the Ministry of Local Government, Urban Development, Housing and Environment at that time.

Some shortcomings, Honourable Chair, were highlighted in that Report, including incorrect estimation used for total tonnes of rubbish that appeared at the landfill. If we fast-forward to the December, 2015 Auditor-General's Report on the construction of Naboro Landfill Stage 2, which is on the Budget Estimates this year, there was a disagreement between the contractor and the Director of Environment, which delayed the finalisation of the agreement for Stage 2. Some outstanding resolved issues are still there from Stage 1, one of which is the recommendation for proper cost and benefit analysis to be based on realistic data in the future.

My concern here is what is due to the landowners, including the percentage of gate fees as per the agreement, up until 2019 where they are supposed to receive two payments per annum. Every six months, they have received in 13 years, nine deposits into their bank account, instead of the deposits that they are supposed to have received. They have been given the run-around between the Ministry of Waterways and Environment and iTaukei Affairs. So for Stage 2, where will the landowners be going? We heard from the Honourable Attorney-General in his Budget Address about the future development planned for this land at Naboro. There are plans to set up a local waste management industry in which there will be a tax free zone, tax exemption, import duty exemption on raw materials, et cetera. So the question is, after looking at their unresolved issues, including the payments, and now they are expanding into the Naboro Landfill Stage 2, the people are wondering what is in there for them - anything or nothing?

When any new additional development work is done on land like Naboro, it only makes sense that proper consultative work is done and there should be a requirement to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the value of this development. That is my motion before the House so that there will be somebody, they say that there is a shortage of staff here somewhere that amount can be paid to look at the issues that are making the landowners run-around between your Ministry, Honourable Minister, and the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs. Thank you, Honourable Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- There are four or five issues here that she has raised, all jumbled up, not totally connected. All those issues are separate issues, but let me address some of the issues. The issue with the tax free zone, that is a new initiative announced by the Honourable Minister for Economy....

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Which concerns their land.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- *Wawa!* Noting that 80 percent of the waste that is generated out of the dump, there was a study about four years ago by Asian Development Bank (ADB) ...

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Consultation.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- No! You have asked that question, let me respond. On the ADB study about four years ago on the dump for Suva City, it was noted that 80 percent of the waste that has been generated, can be recycled. So noting that, the Honourable Minister for Economy has announced that we will have this tax free zone that will attract potential companies to establish their plant there and recycle these materials. So like some of the recycling companies are doing in Lami and Nausori at the moment on their own, so this will see that we attract a lot of companies. In fact, the existing ones, when they did this International Recycling Day, came to us and said, what incentives we could give to bring in new plant and equipment to establish in the West, because we want to establish one in the Western Division. That is the initiative announced by the Honourable Minister of Economy in the Budget announcement.

The other issue regarding the construction of the Land Fill, there was only one company who tendered and the Procurement Office is dealing with them in terms of arriving with the final amount and also doing some training and capacity-building. So my feeling is that in the last stages of the negotiation, very soon the construction should start and the construction should finish by January or February, because by then we note that the Stage 1 would probably may not be able to cater for the material that goes there.

The third issue that the Honourable Member mentioned is that some landowners are running between Ministry and iTaukei, I am not aware of that, and they never came to me, she never raised it with me. As far as I am concerned, there was no issue, it is a non-issue. If it was an issue, she should have raised it with me. You do not come and raise it here in Parliament, this is not where we deal with those kind of matters. Those things are the issues that I can gather from her.

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- No, no, this is not the right place. It is operational matter.

(Honourable Members interject)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will now vote on this motion.

(Chorus of "Ayes" and "Noes")

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	23
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	1

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Qereqeretabua, you have the floor to move your motion. Head 42, Programme 3, Activity 1, SEG 7, you have the floor.

HON. L.S. QEREQERETABUA.- Thank you, Honourable Chairman. My motion is to request the Honourable Minister to please increase the funding allocation for SEG 7 – Compliance and Enforcement of EIA to \$1 million.

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- I support the motion, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor, Honourable Qereqeretabua.

HON. L.S. QEREQERETABUA.- Thank you, Honourable Chairman. Honourable Chairman, this allocation has dropped from \$60,000 in last year's Budget to only \$15,000, and that is just a really small amount, Sir. As we all know Fiji is such a spread out country, we need to give the Environment Department the teeth so they can go and do their job. I was so happy when I heard the Honourable Prime Minister at the ANZ Fiji Excellence and Tourism Award on the 16th of February, warned developers that if they came to Fiji and try to degrade our environment that they would be dealt with very strongly. But, \$15,000 for Compliance and Enforcement of the EIA is just not enough for them to do their jobs, Sir. And that is why I am just really pleading on behalf of everyone in Fiji who cares about the environment and the Ministry and the Department of Environment, to please consider increasing their allocation. Thank you Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Tikoduadua, you have the floor.

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- Thank you, Honourable Chairman. Honourable Chairman, I rise to support the motion before the House. There is no need to further reinforce the need to enforce our laws with regards to people being compliant with environmental laws in the development wherever that this is being carried out in Fiji. Latest example have proven this, and that it reinforces the point further that the laws have to be strong and it needs to be resourced. The amount that is allocated is definitely not enough and therefore we support the motion to have the funds further increased. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Niko Nawaikula, you have the floor.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- I thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wish to contribute to this, I wish to make it clear to the Honourable Minister, do not take these things personally.

(Laughter)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- It is only because you do not perform that we bring it here.

(Laughter)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- In relation to Naboro, the landowners are not getting anything, period. I will raise it with you outside, and if you don't resolve it there, I will bring it here.

HON. MEMBER.- Good, good!!

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Now in relation to this, my point is this....

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Apologise now for bringing it here.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- There is no enforcement of EIA period. I challenge the Honourable Minister to tell this House how many prosecutions his Ministry have done in relation to those who breach EIA standards. EIA in my opinion is a necessary admin tool. They do it, so spend much money, but never once, I can tell you have I seen anyone prosecuted until Free Soul, only because Free Soul was brought into the foreign media.

(Honourable Member interjects)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- It has to take someone from New Zealand to come here and show us the people who are breaching the EIA, for the Honourable Minister to react.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- No, no, no!

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- He said there will be prosecution.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- We reacted before that. Don't talk like that!

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Order, order!

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- I hope in answer to this the Honourable Minister said, "Okay, we have successfully prosecuted 1, 2, 3, 4".

HON. MEMBER.- Yes, yes, yes.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- In all these years, even go back 10 years. Yes, you can tell us now.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.-. We won a court case in Nausori, Mr. Chairman. We prosecuted a company who without doing EIA went ahead and established an asphalt plant in Nausori, last year. We took them to court, I will give you the judgement. We took them to court, and the court ordered we demolished that plant and they paid a fine of \$10,000. So, don't come here and say that we have done nothing.

Back to the motion of the Honourable Qereqeretabua about that \$50,000 allocation. Mr Chairman that allocation is for us not for staffing, there is a separate allocation. There is whole unit on EIA; then Unit on ozone depletion; Unit on litter waste management. We have additional positions advertised for EIA

Officers. We have just taken about three officers a month ago for EIA, enforcement and compliance and inspections. We have an additional activity, we started last year on going around and inviting public and informing them on processes they need to follow for EIA, and also the handling of hazardous waste.

After that, we agreed to do a separate only on EIA, where we got mostly this hotel activity. Coral Coast, so Sigatoka we did one; Nadi, Denarau; we did in Savusavu; all these hotspots only on EIA. So this is for the pamphlet, the awareness material. There is another \$50,000 allocated here additional for the enforcement of the Environment Management Act, 2005. This is not the \$10,000 for enforcement of officers, this is a separate salary budget for the EIA Unit.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will vote on this motion.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	23
Noes	:	26
Not Voted	:	2

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, I give the floor to the Honourable Ratu Tevita Navurelevu to move his motion on Head 42-3-1(7). You have the floor, Sir.

HON. RATU T. NAVURELEVU.- Thank you, Honourable Chairman. I move a motion under Head 42-3-1(7), relating to the Fiji Ridge to Reef, to increase the allocation by \$700,000.

HON. M. BULANAUCA.- Mr. Chairman, I second the motion Sir.

HON. RATU T. NAVURELEVU.- Thank you Mr. Chairman. We are all aware that the environment with full reach of its natural resources is the only vital component to our health and wealth, socially and economically. The only reason behind increasing this amount in this allocation is simply due to the needs for conservation. Taking into consideration the number of areas ongoing and existing ones protected and the areas have been identified as Reef and Ridges Project, there is a need to have sufficient fund to supplement. There are needs to do several works like demarcating; installing signboards or billboards; consultation, awareness and policing exercises in order to speed up the process and provide sustainability of the projects. That is all about the motion Mr. Chairman. *Vinaka*.

(Chorus of interjections)

MR CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Mr. Chairman, the issues he highlighted is correct, but the funding is not limited to this. We can get additional funds based on the proposals that we write to SPC. So there is no issue about funding related to ridge to reef. So that work is being undertaken and there is no issue about funding related to that, there is funding available and all we need to do is get a proposal to SPC and we get the funding for that. This is the approved funding at the moment for existing research projects.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	22
Noes	:	26
Not voted	:	3

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will now vote on Head 42, that the amount of Head 42 – Ministry of Waterways and Environment be approved.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of `Ayes` and `Noes`)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	26
Noes	:	23
Not voted	:	2

Head 42 agreed to

Head 43 – Fiji Roads Authority

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, Head 43, Programme 1, Activity 1.

HON. RO T.V. KEP.A.- Mr. Chairman, this is to do with SEG 6, Operating Grant. In that allocation, there is also \$8.7 million for street lights and traffic signals improvement programme. My question is on street lights. There are street lights from the Nausori Airport to Wainibokasi Bridge, just past the Hospital. My question therefore for the Honourable Minister, is also to do with Tailevu South in which they have put some street lights. Will there be street lights also in the Tokatoka area and Rewa Delta area?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- There is nothing here on street lights.

HON. RO T.V. KEP.A.- It is there in the write up Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister, you have the floor.

HON. RO T.V. KEP.A.- My question to you Honourable Minister is with this Operating Grant, there is \$8.7 million ...

HON. P.K. BALA.- Asking who?

HON. RO T.V. KEP.A.- The Honourable Minister who is responsible for the Fiji Roads Authority.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Which one, where is he?

(Laughter)

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- So who is responsible? You looking at me with the question mark on your face, I am wondering why you asking me that question (to Honourable Bala). When I was speaking to him (Honourable Usamate), you are looking at me.

HON. P.K. BALÄ.- Why you want to look at him?

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- I think it is too late for you tonight (to Honourable Bala).

(Laughter)

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- Because you are looking at me with that kind of look on your face.

(Laughter)

HON. R.S. AKBÄR.- What kind of look?

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- I know that I am supposed to be looking at you, but do not look at me.

HON. R.S. AKBÄR.- Do not look at her.

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- So my question is on the street lights, there is an allocation here Honourable Minister for that. My question, besides Tailevu South, and I am not looking at anyone in front of you, Honourable Minister. Besides Tailevu South, are lights going to be put up for the Tokatoka area which is very dark too at night and also for the Rewa Delta area?

HON. J. USÄMÄTE.- Thank you Mr. Chairman, the list of areas, though it does not identify specific localities, it is provided in Page 152 of the Budget Kit.

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- So for us?

HON. J. USÄMÄTE.- In this Budget Kit, it has Nausori-Suva corridor.

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- Yes, we know that.

HON. J. USÄMÄTE.- I think that is what it has, Nausori-Suva corridor and Suva Central Business District, that is probably it.

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- Honourable Minister, I know it is going to go right through to Natena, but instead of going that way, can you just bring it across the bridge to Tokatoka and the Rewa area? Thank you Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Any further comments on this? Yes, Honourable Bulitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITÄVU.- Just the comment Sir. SEG (10) Capital Grant – Fiji Roads Authority (\$300,761,278), if the Honourable Minister can refer on upgrading of Rural Roads Programme on Page 149 and 150 of the Budget Kit. The Northern Division, Niurua Raviravi Stage 2 & Crossings, will this be the completion of the project or what phase is this, Page 150?

HON. J. USÄMÄTE.- Which road?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Niurua Raviravi Stage 2, Northern Division.

HON. J. USAMATE.- I do not have the answer whether it is in completion or whether it is in intermediate phase. Perhaps you can e-mail me and I will get the response.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- I can give you an e-mail.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Please do.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Vinaka.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Aseri Radrodro

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you Mr. Chairman. Just on the new street lights to be installed in Nausori–Suva corridor, will this Nausori-Suva corridor come up through Colo-i- Suva?

HON. MEMBER.- Already being done.

HON. J. USAMATE.- I believe it is along the main road, not the back road.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- So, can you consider that in your solar streetlight Central Division, there is no breakdown there, and also to consider from Sawani to Serea Road?

HON. J. USAMATE.- For the Solar Streetlight in the Central Division, we will consider the best place to put it in.

HON. V. NATH.- Mr. Chairman, the streetlight as the Honourable Member have requested, just to add on what the Honourable Minister had just mentioned, we have started from Princess Road, it is already started if you look from Sawani way, there are some places as the Honourable Attorney-General had mentioned earlier, at the major junctions, we are putting the streetlights at this point in time, so it is already in our plan, but it will be in phases, at the junctions especially.

HON. S.R. RASOVA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There has been a lot of accidents at the Nadi Back Road in the West, where there is highest number of accidents and we know that it is in the report. If they can look at to the Nadi back road from town to the Airport. *Vinaka.*

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Tikoduadua, you have the floor.

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My comments and question to the Honourable Minister is on the Operating Grant for Fiji Roads Authority. I know that the package shows all the details. However, some critical assessments on the state of our roads right now, and I believe the Honourable Minister has mentioned a couple of times, about the legacy issues and FRA has now been in operation for more than four years.

Now, what exactly is FRA putting into place in terms of its asset management, particularly after the absence of MWH and now FRA has got the functions of all engineering works and coordination. When can we see a drastic improvement in terms of how the roads and drainage assets are managed into the future, because right now, apart from the congestion on the road we are trying to manage as well the quick deterioration state of our road as it were. So that is my question to the Honourable Minister with regards to this Operating Grant. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor, Honourable Minister.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Mr. Chairman, I think the legacy issues are quite considerable, they go back years, they go back decades. I think there had been a study that was undertaken during the time of the Department of National Roads where they had put up a recommendation on the amount of money that needed to be spent on the roads from that time, I think, a few decades back. But that was never implemented so the effect of that has built-up over the years until now. So, I think it is going to take a considerable number of years before we can claw back on the impact of those legacy issues that have built up over a considerable amount of time.

You will see the bridges that we have now, the bridge in Vesidrua, we have to have fulltime LTA people there because of the weight of vehicles that are crossing that road. That is not the only one. You have seen what is happening now for the Tamavua Bridge that is here in Suva. All of these things in terms of the volume of cars, the quality of the work that was done on the roads and the bridges, the quality of materials that was put in place, the quality of the supervision; these are things that have taken up a long time. And I know that FRA has its own estimates or the amount of money that needs to be put into the assets that we do have, to bring them up to par. I do not have the exact or the number of the time period that it will take with me, and that is something that I will need to discuss with the Board, but it is still going to take us some time to get to that level.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will now vote on Head 43, that the amount of Head 43 - Fiji Roads Authority, be approved.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of 'Ayes' and 'Noes')

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	27
Noes	:	21
Not voted	:	3

Head 43 agreed to.

Head 49 – Peacekeeping Missions

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, the floor is open for Head 49-1-1. Honourable Bilitavu, you have the floor.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Through you, Mr. Chairman, on Activity 1(4) - Maintenance of Bushmasters. Is it an annual fees required to maintain these Bushmasters, the maintenance reduced from \$400,000 to \$200,000 this year?

HON. COL. LT. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. These are probably two or three Bushmasters left here in the country. Those that are in the Mission areas come under the lease arrangements. Now, because we own it, therefore, it is under dry lease. We send it to the Mission area and we are responsible for its maintenance as well. So, this is just for the ones that they use at the Black Rock for the training.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Ro Filipe Tuisawau, you have the floor.

HON. RO F. TUISAWAU.- Just one question, Mr. Chairman and Honourable Minister. The total of \$77.5 million for peacekeeping, the percentage of that, is it recoverable from the UN or other agencies?

HON. COL. LT. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before I answer the question by the Honourable Ro Filipe, on my last response on the lease, in fact, I have to confirm whether it is on dry lease or wet lease. Let me just explain the difference between the two.

Wet lease, it is a contingent-owned equipment, but then if we do not have the capacity, the UN provides all the necessary support, including the maintenance. Dry lease is if we as a contingent, that I will have to confirm, but it is a contingent-owned equipment now because we have got that.

We do spend a lot of money on deploying peacekeepers. That is part of our commitment as a responsible global citizen. Given the rate that we pay, I do not have the exact amount, maybe the Ministry of Economy can give us more information on the reimbursements that come, but what I can say is, probably initially, we were making money out of peacekeeping. But now, like most other peacekeeping countries, there is reimbursement but we are into spending more on maintaining our commitments rather than what we get, but I do not have the exact figures to that effect. But let me also just say, Honourable Chair, Sir, that right now the Secretary-General to the United Nations, I think just last week, he is pleading again to the member countries, particularly the US, on the contribution for peacekeeping because they are in arrears now because reimbursements need to be done to contributing countries. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Leader of the Opposition, you have the floor.

HON. MAJOR GEN. (RET'D) S.L. RABUKA.- Mr. Chairman, my question was basically the same, that is based on the reimbursement rate per each person per month. What is the net charge on the difference between the reimbursed amount and what we use?

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Honourable Chairman, Sir, unfortunately, I do not have the figures, to be specific.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Bulitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, on SEG 7, Mr. Chairman, Sir on the Standby Arrangement for Deployment to Peacekeeping Missions, it is reduced by \$100,000. What is the reason for that decrease?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Minister.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Thank you, on the standby arrangements, we have undergone a few cycles of audit already by the UN Team, and that includes the Police Force as well. So they came and did the assessments on our state of readiness and that is why for those components that we have fulfilled, there is no need for us, but we will still maintain the allocation for the rest of the activities according to our commitments.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Activity 2?

(Chorus of `Noes`)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Activity 3?

(Chorus of `Noes`)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Program 2-1?

(Chorus of `Noes`)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, Parliament will now vote on Head 49, that the amount of Head 49 - Peacekeeping Missions be approved.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of 'Ayes' and 'Noes')

Votes cast

Ayes	:	36
Noes	:	13
Not Voted	:	2

Head 49 agreed to.

Head 50 – Miscellaneous Services

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, SEG 1?

(Chorus of 'Noes')

MR. CHAIRMAN.- SEG 3?

(Chorus of 'Noes')

MR. CHAIRMAN.- SEG 5, Honourable Tuisawau, you have a motion on Head 50. You have the floor.

HON. RO F. TUISAWAU.- Thank you. Just on this, Honourable Chair, regarding Public Service Broadcast [TV] (\$4,600,000) - SEG 7 - \$4.6 million. This is for fees which are given to Fiji Television Limited in terms of Public Service Broadcast. FBC has been accumulating losses and just in the last two years, they have managed to make profits. In line with that improved performance, we need to review the amount given to them, so I am now recommending that that be reduced by \$1 million.

The other issue here is the component of VAT that Public Service Broadcast [TV] (\$4,600,000) programmes which are produced and delivered to the public. I feel that needs to be reviewed in terms of the costing, so that is another issue moving forward regarding the tendering of that part of the Service. I am proposing that we decrease that by \$1 million in order for the Company to move forward to self-sufficiency. *Vinaka!*

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Mr. Chairman, Sir, my apologies for that. The motion is to reduce it?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- To reduce it by \$1 million.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- By \$1 million? Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. I understand the Honourable Member is part of the Committee in which FBC appeared, and I understand that the Member also, it would appear, understood what was carried out through the Public Service Broadcast.

As has been highlighted, Mr. Chairman, Sir, that they have been explained, I understand quite well in respect of losses on the books. We have depreciations, loan repayments, et cetera, but I think what is more important is that, the value that is provided to us, both through Public Service Broadcast [Television

and Radio], is \$25.4 million. That is the airtime that has actually been broadcast to us. But we, as Government, have negotiated it down and we are only paying them \$11.2 million. The Honourable Member does know about this from my understanding of it, that he did understand it during the Committee time but obviously he is now not misunderstanding it. It does provide a very valuable service.

The increment there, Mr. Chairman, Sir, of \$379,591 is the VAT component because as Honourable Members would know, it used to appear in SEG 6. When items appear in SEG 5, you need to have the VAT component so, that is simply the VAT component of what we have in that particular area but it does provide a very valuable service, Mr. Chairman, Sir.

As we have also highlighted that we are now seeing in particular through the Walesi platform when we are going to go digital that they will start providing even further community-based programmes. In fact the cost we are paying them is far low compared to the actual airtime that we do get because that is their product. Airtime is their product and we are getting a lot more for what we are paying.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Nawaikula, you have the floor.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- I support the motion to reduce it for a number of reasons. Public Service Broadcast is also provided for by Fiji Television Limited and FM 96 and all these others, so we must have equality, there must be equal distribution to those who provide this service.

The second reason why I support it is because it is totally unfair to be directing this payment to FBC when FBC is used as a propaganda, that is the word, propaganda too for the Government. It is very one-sided and, look at it objectively. So how should we from this side of the House and everyone else pay FBC, when FBC is only promoting FijiFirst everywhere?

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- And even in programmes.

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- *Curucurui* or what is that?

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Even Radio Fiji in what you now call the “Expo Programme”, you have changed the name from “Road Show”, it is now called “Expo.” And it is broadcasted in FBC, so it is marketing your policy.

(Inaudible interjection)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- No, not Government, FijiFirst. And it does not give a balance of fair view, so it does not deserve it. We must reduce it, that is our money too, remember.

(Honourable Members interject)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- We will go to the vote.

(Chorus of ‘Ayes’ and ‘Noes’)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	21
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	3

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Tuisawau, you have the floor to move your second motion.

HON. RO F. TUISAWAU.- Yes, thank you, Honourable Chairman. The next one is on SEG 5(8), to decrease Public Service Broadcast (Radio) \$6,677,400 there to decrease by \$1 million. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Is there a seconder?

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- I second the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- You have the floor, Honourable Tuisawau.

HON. RO F. TUISAWAU.- Thank you Honourable Chairman. Again, as I explained, it has made profits in the last two years, prior to that, they were making losses. So we would like to move it to self-sufficiency, and the other issue brought up by Honourable Sayed-Khaiyum our Minister for Economy regarding the value of services provided which FBC has valued at around, I think, \$23 million. They are saying that they are short, minus that amount there which is \$11.2 million.

That is their perception in terms of the value, so my view is that, that value of what they perceive as value which is more than what is stated there, that needs to be determined by an independent evaluation not by themselves in order to determine the true value, so that we know what exactly the Government or public funds needs to be paid to them. At the moment, that is not determined independently, and the way forward is to tender this TV, Radio as explained by Honourable Nawaikula. There are other service providers around, we value that. Once we get independent evaluation then we tender it. If they win it, that is fine. But at the moment, since the profits are increasing, there is no independent evaluation of the services, that is why I am proposing to decrease by \$1 million. Thank you, Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you. Mr. Chairman, Sir, this is about radio now, I thought we had dealt with both TV and Radio earlier on. But, the Honourable Member should know that no other Radio Station provides AM services. And I have said this before, AM, the frequency travels a lot better over water. AM now reaches the Southern tip of the Lau Group which is:

- Rotuma; and
- Cikobia.

The FBC, the capacity to do that, over the past number of decades, the capacity in AM deteriorated quite significantly and again I want to say this, the AM Station is in Naulu. If you go up there on the hill, the Japanese Government partnered with FBC and put in a grant of close to \$13 million to help them get the AM Station up and running. The way it works is that, so they did that, the Honourable Prime Minister did the commissioning of it. So now you have AM Stations reaching all over Fiji.

Just put very simply, when you have two villages living on one island, if you want to run it commercially, the companies are not going to advertise for those villages because there is probably only

about 50 people living there. It does not make commercial sense so you cannot get the dollar value in advertising, that is how radio stations, TV stations all over the world, even newspapers that is how they make money through advertising.

This is why you find that generally media organisation do what we call “cherry picking”, whether it is radio, whether it is television, they will only broadcast to areas where there is large pockets of population. So then they will go out to the business community and say, “my radio station reaches the Suva/Nausori corridor, there are 300,000 people living there, if you want to market your Boom detergent, come and advertise it with me,” that is what happens. That is how the system works.

But they are not going to go and say to them, “we are reaching 50 people and you pay us \$100 for 5 minutes”. Because they will say, “no, it does not make sense for us.” So this is why it becomes then Public Service Broadcast because they will run programmes, the cost of running AM frequency is actually very expensive. The cables in AM actually go underground in a wet area because the cables conducts better in wet climate.

This is why in Naulu when you go there, that is how they have done it, and then the frequency reaches out. The point of the matter is that Public Service Broadcast - no one will advertise on those channels. This is why you listen to RF1. Honourable Kuridrani will tell you in Namatakula it is RF2; people listen to RF2. How much advertising do you get generally in RF2? Very little! Because no one generally will want to advertise.

So, now they are also trying to convert the AM into FM, there is a backup now. I hope the Honourable Member knows what he is talking about, that this is the point of Public Service Broadcast. There is no one else, you are saying, “fund it out.” No one else has AM frequency capacity. That is the point.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you.

Honourable Members we will now vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	24
Noes	:	27

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- SEG 6?

(Chorus of ‘Ayes’ and ‘Noes’)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Clarification. Item 8, Rental Subsidy for Disadvantaged Persons. We have a disadvantage person - iTLTB. Could we just have clarification on how disadvantaged is determined or how is it assessed?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- We have generally had people who have applied for this, for example, a disabled, or the breadwinner, for example, has had a stroke and the families there cannot fend for themselves and they can apply through this process, and then Government will pay the lease to the landowners through iTLTB on behalf of the lessees. That is how it is done.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Bultavu, you have the floor.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. I move that on SEG 6, Activity 8 on Rental Subsidy for Disadvantaged Persons be increased by \$200,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Do we have a seconder?

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- I second the motion, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Bultavu you have the floor.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Mr. Chairman Sir, I think this allocation last year was about \$300,000 that has decreased to \$100,000, and the reason for this motion is given that we all support people with disabilities who want to own lease and we agree with the idea of subsidising disadvantaged people to secure leases, but given the decrease, the FijiFirst Government has been advocating on their championing disability and all other issues in regards to those who are disadvantage. But I think it is not reflected in this budget in this allocation and that is the reason why this needs to increase to really show the disabled community that we really support their development and for them to own lease titles.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Mr. Chairman, just so we can expedite the matter. This is not to obtain new leases, this is for people who already have a lease and then there is a particular incident or occurrence in the lives of the lessee that stops them from being able to meet their lease payment schedule. That is how we help them.

The reason why it has been reduced is because of the uptake of this. So, it is on the spending trend. There is no point to keep on allocating a particular amount when the uptake is much lower so we have now aligned the uptake of it and we believe \$100,000 as allocated would be the amount that actually would be spent, in fact there is a little bit of fat built into it just in case there would be more people. So, that is how it is done and obviously if the trend goes up then we can allocate it but it does not in any way mean that we are negating the position of those people who do need it.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will now vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	24
Noes	:	27

Motion is defeated.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just need some clarification from the Honourable Minister on SEG 7, Public Private Partnership for Health - Transition phase construction obligation completion payment of \$14.4 million, and Operations and Maintenance which has been allocated \$20 million. The reason why I am seeking this clarification, Mr. Chairman because I remain sceptical about Public Private Partnership in Health. I am seeking this clarification to ensure that we do not get into a situation where many countries have, many examples in Australia, where Public Private Partnership in Health did not work and government eventually had to go and take back the hospitals, the infrastructure to run it on its own.

I am trying to seek clarification whether they suggest for transition phase and we would need more money for Aspen Medical Pty Limited, there would be of course, contractual obligations there. I know Ba Hospital was built at a cost of about \$30 million and we are told that, actually Aspen told the citizens of Ba and the Chamber of Commerce in Ba that the hospital is not going to open this year and they are not sure when it is going to open next year. So, if the Minister could explain to us what is happening and where we are and whether we have everything worked out so that this Public Private Partnership is successful and the objectives behind the Public Private Partnership with the Minister quite eloquently explained in Parliament previously. We want to make sure that all the ingredients in this Public Private Partnership are not going to land us in a situation where Government will have to come back again and spend much more than what we envisage. That is where I leave it, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Attorney- General.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Honourable Member for this question. I think I have addressed this a number of times. I can equally produce a number of hospitals where PPP actually has been highly successful, not just only in Australia but even in countries like India. We used the medical team from IFC that has done work around the world, even including in the former Soviet Republics and various other countries, even in some of the European countries where they have worked together with the Governments to have a PPP. They have been highly successful, there are a number of articles on that too.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you, that if you look at the allocation in the Head 22, that has the Health and Medical Services, we still have some allocation for Lautoka and Ba Hospitals. In fact, if you look at that, we in fact have built in some fat, because that is in fact catering for cost for more than over six months.

The Aspen Medical Pty Limited technically takes over the running of the Hospital from next month onwards within the six months. They completely take over the running for those Hospitals which they have to do.

Therefore, from then on, that particular allocation in Head 22, for Health and Medical Services, will no longer be applicable but the funding that is available here will be applicable.

There are two components in this which you have rightly pointed out, one of them of course is the immediate refurbishment, which we are going to do in any case. The other one is, of course, to pay the fix annuity rates.

Fix annuity rates is what this is going to be for. When you have fix annuity rates, it essentially means that currently all the Fijians who are going to this Hospital, will not be affected by any of this PPP in respect of taking out more money from the pocket. It does not affect that at all.

That is obviously something we were very keen on right from the beginning, it does not affect the ability of our citizens to not pay those rates, that they have to pay higher rates. Of course, at the same time, there are various procedures that will now be available through this PPP. That PPP obviously, like we said, one of the requirements we have, what it needs to have are Cardiovascular surgeries available 24/7. No Fijian has to go to India or Australia or New Zealand or Philippines or Singapore to get an open heart surgery done. They would get it done in Lautoka. That is one of the key components of that.

The second one, of course, is, that there is a chemotherapy that will now be available fully in this Hospital and a range of other procedures.

On the flip side, Mr. Chairman, Sir, there are other procedures that can be made available at the Hospital where Government itself can actually make money on, what we call superficial type of surgeries. People go around the world, for example, getting at the end of the day plastic surgery. That is what we call the additional component, Government will benefit from that also.

Of course, the types of machinery that will be available. In all of these, as we have said right from the beginning, none of the staff that are engaged through the Public Health System in Lautoka and Ba will lose their jobs. They have the opportunity, they have already been told this, they have HR specialists that have come from Australia. As you know, they are very heavily cognisant of things like trade union relationships, et cetera, people will be given the option.

If they want to remain in the Public Health System, they will be employed by Government. They will be put in other Hospitals or should they wish to sign an individual contract with Aspen Medical Pty Limited, they will go along with that.

The other point about it, of course, is that, the tender (and someone sort of questioned the whole tender and what have you), it was done through IFC through an Open Tender Process. I saw a former Member of Parliament in an article today that was floating around, I do not know whether Honourable Prasad has seen it, who is creating and making all sorts of innuendos and coming up with theories. It was a completely Open Tender Process, the Australian Government actually funded almost over half of this actual process that we went through.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) has agreed to help fund specialists to be based in Fiji for the next two years to help us manage this contract because obviously, it has not been done in Fiji before, so we will build capacity in the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Economy to ensure that the management of this contract and the way that we deal with the service provider is done very professionally.

The third element, of course, highlighted was about FNPF. FNPF is the majority shareholder in the special purpose vehicle that actually has won the tender. It owns 80 percent of this particular company, Aspen Medical Pty Limited, will be the company that is a shareholder of 20 percent but they provide the management of the actual hospital itself.

Part of the deal is, they have to build at least a 200-bed New Wing Hospital at Lautoka and part of the deal also is, it has to be obviously international standard, et cetera, is that they have to have operating theatres in which you have what we call "viewing areas" for our medical students who can actually go and view procedures and we build the specialist training from a very early period of the medical profession. So these are some overall tenets of it and I hope that addresses the issue.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- SEG 8.

(Chorus of 'Noes')

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Lynda Tabuya, you have the floor.

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a question of clarification to the Honourable Minister, Item 6 under SEG 8, Office Refurbishment (\$3,272,170). What office is that referring to? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. Mr. Chairman, this Office Refurbishment is what we call the pooling of funds as we have done it previously. For example, the Honourable Minister for Fisheries is very keen to get his Office refurbished so we have a pool of funds that sits there so when different offices want refurbishment it comes from that pool. It is not for one particular office.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- SEG 9.

(Chorus of `Noes`)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- SEG 10.

(Chorus of `Noes`)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Bulitavu, you have the floor on a motion.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. I move that Head 50, Activity 9, SEG 10 on iTaukei Land Development Grant, to be increased by \$10 million.

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- I second the motion, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Very nearly lapsed, you have the floor.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. I think this is a very important allocation. It started in the 2015 Budget, the sum of \$10 million, and the next Budget was \$10 million and the last Budget year for those that were not here was at \$12 million, and it is reduced to \$2 million.

I think this is very important for iTaukei Land Development to adding value into land and also sub-divisional projects and helping landowners, especially those who are closer to towns and urban areas, to develop the lands and also market their lands. There has been some projects at Yadua, but no progress in the Northern Division, and also in the other divisions for the last four years. Although it is \$2 million, we seek an increase because this will enhance the capacity of the iTaukei community, them becoming business people and become entrepreneurs and also a matching up to the time we are at this day and age of globalisation that we increase them. Given that FiiFirst has been advocating saying that they are protecting indigenous rights, this is an allocation where it should be seen that we increase so that indigenous Fijian landowners fully realise their business stability and accelerate them into the economic sector. *Vinaka vakalevu.*

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Lynda Tabuya, you have the floor.

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to contribute to the motion in support of it in terms of increasing this amount. I just like to commend the Government that at least here, there is the use of iTaukei Land Development, and also to support what had been stated earlier by Honourable Kuridrani about the need to have access to ethnicity when it comes to farmers and where they are distributed because they would then know in terms of ethnicity, who would then be able to be entitled to this particular provision of iTaukei Land Development. So, very grateful to the Government, it could assist all this information on ethnicity as far as farmers, which we had alluded to earlier. It is not about racism....

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Please, talk about the motion.

HON. L.D. TABUYA.- I am talking about the motion. In support of that bringing it together that this particular iTaukei Land Development Programme and the need to increase it, is really about that. It is about target marketing and being able to assist the iTaukei landowners, who have the land free available, but can then partner with non-iTaukei to have business ventures, thank you.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- No.

HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.- You got it wrong.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Sayed-Khaiyum

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Mr. Chairman, Sir, before I address this, I have some notes that people have raised issues before. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition had asked about Sovi Basin. It is the National Trust of Fiji that has a relationship with the landowners at Sovi Basin, and they are the ones who do whatever compensation on lease money is.

I heard yesterday said, Honourable Qereqeretabua and Honourable Gavoka had raised the issue about the report on DQFTR, the one that crashed in Vanua Levu, and I said I will give the website address - civilaviation.gov.fj and the report is there. You can get the report from that.

(Honourable Member interjected)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- I am sorry, I am just clarifying some information, Mr. Chairman, and I will get to the motion.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, no Government has carried out such a project before and specifically, there have been other programmes like the Blueprint where people could set up companies, there will be a preferential contracts, et cetera, but this is to do with actual land.

Sir, 91 percent of all land in Fiji is iTaukei-owned, and as we said when we introduced this particular programme is that, unfortunately, notwithstanding the fact that the landowners are the ones who own majority of the land in Fiji, they were not the main developers of the land. What used to happen is that, people would come along, developers with deep pockets would lease vast tracts of the iTaukei land and then go and develop it because they have the funds, and then make a killing on each plot of land that they actually lease out. That was a big issue.

We saw that we need to empower these landowners directly in respect of them having control over their land but we wanted to fund them to be able to develop this land because many of them actually do not have the cash up front. So, we started this programme and Honourable Bulitavu does know about this. Honourable Tabuya was not around at that time when we started it, I mean, in Parliament. What we actually did, Mr. Chairman, was that we have \$12 million allocation. We said that any Land Owning Units could actually come, give in a proposal, they needed to have some very basic standards that need to be in place, for example, if they had a concept plan, if they had some of the EIAs met, and they need to have complete control over the land.

We have actually had some issues. Some of you may know that in Tamavua, we had one particular group of landowners who said that they had been given an actual lease over the land overlooking the Laucala Bay area and then when we did say that we are going to develop that land, then another group came along and there is a dispute, so we obviously backed off.

We have had a number of applications, for example, one around the Lami area where we had two groups of landowning units over the same block of land so we obviously stepped aside.

We have completed the subdivision in Vuda, the Wairebetia Saweni Subdivision, Yadua is about to be completed, opposite Pacific Green. Now, Yadua actually, once it is completed, this is prime land and these people will be able to sell these blocks of land and I suspect for more than half a million dollars each, at least, for premium because they have a fantastic beach access, et cetera. There is Namata also in Tailevu, where that has also started. Some of the lands that actually have been made available for us for development, some of them are not necessarily up to scratch. For example, the Namata land had some issues with drainage and it is a very good area for residential development. Work has already started on that. This work will obviously continue.

What will actually happen when these areas I just read out, once the land is developed, as you see one of the most apparent was obviously the one in Yadua, Pacific Green, you see they have put lights at the entrance, is tarsealed, proper drainage, et cetera. The moment, they start leasing this out, the money will go directly to them. No one else will have a bite of the cherry.

Again, we have four applications. One, we have already agreed to now, is:

- Tubalevu in Tavua;
- Viseisei in Vuda, Lautoka; and
- *Mataqali Kawabu* of Namada in Nadroga.

These are the ones that actually have been identified. We are looking at new sites over about 26.25 hectares and we are going to start work on that.

We have had some applications for Vitogo but again, there were some issues with that, so these amount of money Mr. Chairman, Sir, is adequate enough to complete the existing ones and also to start the scoping work for the other four that we have identified.

Obviously, in the following year when the scoping is done in this financial year 2019-2020 and the construction starts, then the money will go up, because we will need the actual funds to start doing the physical works. That is why the amount is there. I mean, allocating funds by increasing it again, does not, in any way, mean that suddenly it will get done faster because you actually have to do a lot of geo-tech studies, for example, if the land is going to be used for industrial purposes, you have to be able to know that if someone is going to come and put a factory and two storey building, whether there is enough rock bedding to have the foundation in this place or not.

So this is how you actually market the actual subdivision. If you simply just subdivide it and say it is for industrial purposes, no one is going to buy it because they will say, “Hang on, it is very clay soil, you cannot put any building”, so the value for the landowner goes down. That is what we do not want. We want this to be prime development and anything done under this banner, we want people to say, “This is quality subdivision, we are going to buy the lands here.” Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, we will now vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	24
Noes	:	27

Motion is defeated.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members we will now vote on Head 50, that the amount of Head 50 – Miscellaneous Services be approved.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ‘Ayes’ and ‘Noes’)

Votes cast

Ayes	:	27
Noes	:	24

Head 50 agreed to.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, as was explained at the outset, Heads 51 and 52 are Standing Appropriations sometimes called “below the line appropriations.”

Head 51 lists all the pensions that are payable. These are a charge on the Government finances.

Head 52 are the Charges on Account of Public Debt. These numerous pages list all the information on interests and loans by the State. Neither Head is voted upon because they must be paid and are, therefore, already catered for.

Honourable Members, that brings us to the end of the Estimates. We shall now move to considering the Schedules and Clauses of the 2019-2020 Appropriation Bill 2019, Bill No 7 of 2019, as required by Standing Order 101.

I advise Honourable Members that since we have not amended the Estimates, Standing Orders 101 prevents any amendments being moved and made at this stage. Standing Orders 101(3) also prevents any debate on these questions.

Schedule 1

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, the Parliament will now vote that Schedule 1 stands part of the Bill.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ‘Ayes’ and ‘Noes’)

Votes cast

Ayes	:	27
Noes	:	24

Schedule 1 agreed to.

Schedule 2

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, Parliament will now vote that Schedule 2 stands part of the Bill.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ‘Ayes’ and ‘Noes’)

Votes cast

Ayes	:	27
Noes	:	24

Schedule 2 agreed to.

Clause 1

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, the Parliament will now vote, that Clause 1 stands part of the Bill.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of 'Ayes' and 'Noes')

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	27
Noes	:	24

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, the Parliament will now vote, that Clause 2 stands part of the Bill.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of 'Ayes' and 'Noes')

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	27
Noes	:	23
Not Voted	:	1

Clause 2 agreed to.

Clause 3

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, the Parliament will now vote, that Clause 3 stands part of the Bill.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of 'Ayes' and 'Noes')

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	27
Noes	:	24

Clause 3 agreed to.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, that brings us to the end of the Committee of Supply. We have now concluded voting on Head 1 to Head 50, as well as the Schedules and Clauses of the 2019-2020 Appropriation Bill, 2019, (Bill No. 7 of 2019).

The House resumed:

Bill reported without amendment, read a third time and passed. (Act No. of 2019)

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Members, Parliament has now passed the 2019-2020 Budget.

(Acclamation)

I thank all Honourable Members for your contributions to this significant and integral process.

I also congratulate the Honourable Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications on the passing of the Budget.

Thank you, Honourable Members, for your forbearance and your cooperation during this budget.

Honourable Members, we will now adjourn until tomorrow morning at 9.30 a.m.

The Parliament adjourned at 11.17 p.m.